Daily Report

Latin America

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Cuba

Official on 34th Anniversary of Revolutionary Police

FL0601122493 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Interview with Central Committee Member Glenda Azoy Quintana by Eva Alvarez in Havana—recorded]

[Text] [Alvarez] What is the Communist Party of Cuba's [PCC] evaluation of the organization and current operation of the Unified Vigilance and Protection System [SUVP] in Havana?

[Azoy] The SUVP in Havana has been organized and implemented. We believe there is still an important part left to be done in consolidating and perfecting the operation of the system, especially at the sector level; that is, the sector work groups, which are in the neighborhoods, where problems such as the black market, illegal currency exchange, and others occur. We have to emphasize the role of all the factors concerning the PCC representatives who lead the groups in order to make the system's work more effective.

Naturally, the police sector chiefs play an important role. When they achieve stability in the sectors with professionalism and competence, everything works much better. Undoubtedly, this is still an aspect that remains weak in the work of confronting criminal activity.

[Alvarez] Do you have a message for the members of the National Revolutionary Police on this 34th anniversary, in view of the missions they are assigned in these times?

[Azoy] First of all, we must give the members of the police a message of congratulations and our solidarity for the good work they carry out. In spite of that fact that we still have many problems in this sector, with criminal activity as I have already explained, I believe the agents of public order, the officers, and all the comrades that head the police are the ones who have basically achieved stability and tranquility among the populace with their hard work throughout these 34 years.

Despite the difficult times we are currently experiencing, with the many problems and difficulties, they have known, despite all the problems, how to play the role that corresponds to them. We must think of these agents of public order and comrades of the police, and the heroic battles they have fought throughout the years, such as the Bay of Pigs invasion. Since the formation of the police, afterwards during the Bay of Pigs invasion, and in all the events that have happened in our nation—including the recent deaths of [Perez] Quintosa and his comrades in Tarara—I believe the comrades of the police have played an extraordinary role.

That is why we give them a message of appreciation for the work they do, and for the effort they make, day after day, 24 hours a day including holidays. While the people rest they are still vigilant. They need the appreciation of all our people and the PCC on this day.

[Alvarez] This was a message from Glenda Azoy Quintana, a member of the Central Committee of the PCC, on the occasion of the 34th anniversary of the National Revolutionary Police.

FAR Civilian Workers Assist in Agricultural Tasks

FL0701191993 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1505 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] About 2,000 civilian workers of the Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR] are participating in work to support and develop the agricultural self-sufficiency plans in the Eastern Army. This force is divided into 40 brigades, which stay on the farms for periods ranging from 30 to 180 days. Lazaro Ricardo, a representative of the secretariat of the National FAR Civilian Command Workers Union, stated that membership in the brigades supporting the agricultural self-sufficiency plans in the Eastern Army is voluntary. The labor leader added that the brigades' personnel show discipline and efficiency in harvesting and cultivating tuber and vegetable crops.

Havana TV on 1992 Achievements in Matanzas

FL0701125193 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] Matanzas Province ended 1992 with significant achievements in the major economic areas and also in the social sphere, in spite of acute limitations of fuel and material resources in general. Although it was necessary to extend the sugar harvest until May, the intense effort by the sugar industry workers meant that the sugar production plan was met, and their preparations for the 1992-1993 season were also admirable. The province started up 10 sugar mills during December in order to take advantage of climatic conditions favorable for milling yields in a harvest in which efficiency is needed as never before.

In the food program, the levels of harvesting and planting tubers, grains, and vegetables increased systematically in comparison with 1991, and there was marked success in the potato harvest, which ended in March with 960,000 quintals harvested and yields of 6,882 quintals per caballeria, the highest in the country. Potato planting has now ended, and they hope to produce 1 million quintals this year. Great efforts were made in setting up the Voisin Rational Grazing System, manufacturing homemade parts, and other alternatives aimed at recovery in the dairy, pork, and poultry industries, which have deteriorated the most among the food production areas.

Other priority programs also showed notable progress. This is the case with tourism, with a 30 percent increase in hard currency earnings. The pace of investment ensured the completion of 689 more hotel rooms in Varadero. Oil production exceeded 650,000 tons of

crude, a new annual record, and created the conditions for reaching 1 million tons this year. The Victoria de Giron Citrus Enterprise, the largest in the country, ended the year with more than 7 million quintals of fruit harvested, 1 million less than in 1991. But that figure reflects an extraordinary effort by the enterprise workers and thousands of mobilized workers from throughout the province, who manually made up for the lack of fuel for the weeding machines and the lack of herbicides.

The Seventh National Spare Parts, Equipment, and Advanced Technologies Forum showed the enormous creativity of all the people aimed at solving problems and coping with limitations. Meritorious efforts made it possible for the health care workers to reach the lowest infant mortality rate in the province's history besides that of 1989, and the education workers were successful in the past school year and began the current year with classrooms and study materials for all the students.

The effort to perfect state institutions and our socialist democracy were translated into the formation of the 83 people's councils planned for 1992. Of these, 77 were in rural areas and 6 were in the provincial capital.

Swedish-Finnish Group Makes Solidarity Donation

FL0801025393 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 8 Jan 93

[Text] The Sweden-Cuba-Finland Friendship Association has made a donation to the Cuban people which consists of $80,000 and two buses. The ceremony took place a few hours ago at the Cuban People's Friendship Institute [ICAP]. The Nordic brigade which arrived in Cuba three weeks ago was in attendance. Anna Artin, the vice president of the Swedish Friendship Association, said:

[Begin Artin recording] Besides the friendship association, 50 support groups, mass organizations, and even certain trade unions have also participated. We have not only collected money—the most important part has been the political support at educational centers, work centers, and public rallies. On many occasions, we have told the people about Cuba on the streets, at temperatures of 10 or 20 below zero, stressing the impact of the criminal U.S. embargo, Cuba's right to continue being a sovereign nation, and the right of its people to rule its own land and destiny. We are going to continue fighting for Cuba. During 1993, we are going to continue the Medicine for Cuba political campaign. [end recording]

ICAP President Sergio Corrieri gave thanks for the solidarity aid and explained its significance to Cuba.

[Begin Corrieri recording] Without disregarding in the least its material value, I agree with our friend Anna in stressing that the most important thing is what is behind this donation; in other words, the moral encouragement that this represents for us. We appreciate very much the conditions under which, we know, these donations are taking place. It is a patient effort, a dedicated effort in which many people participate, generally people who are not wealthy but people who make a modest contribution. [end recording]

During these three weeks in Cuba, the Nordic brigade has contributed 30,000 pesos to the national economy through their labor in agriculture and construction.

Roundup of Economic Activity Reported 4 - 7 Jan

FL0701191893

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of fileworthy reports on economic developments in Cuba carried on Havana radio and television in Spanish between 4 and 7 January. In Matanzas Province, 2.5 million quintals of miscellaneous crops were harvested in 1992. In addition, a record 660,000 tons of crude oil was produced, efforts increased in the citrus harvest, and there was increased tourism. [Radio Rebelde Spanish 1000 GMT 5 Jan]

Workers at the Luis Felipe Alemida Enterprise in Havana have produced more than 1,000 Latino-brand electrical transformers, saving the country more than $500,000. [Radio Rebelde Spanish 1800 GMT 5 Jan]

The "Bazaar de los Orishas," in Varadero, inaugurated at the end of December, has already earned over $1,700 during the first week selling Afro-Cuban religious and cultural artifacts, which have been manufactured for sale to tourists. In Guantanamo Province, cane cutting began today at the Honduras and El Salvador agroindustrial complexes. Grinding is scheduled to begin on 8 January. Thirty brigades are employed in cutting at both complexes. The Cuban Workers Federation will support the harvest with 107 brigades or a total of over 5,000 men, 30 percent greater than the number of cutters in the preceding harvest. In Guantanamo, more than 300 caballerias of cane were planted during the spring and cold-season plantings. [Radio Reloj Spanish 2030 GMT 5 Jan] In Holguin Province in 1992, 600,000 more quintals of tubers were produced than in 1991. Vegetable production also exceeded 1991 levels although difficulties with resources prevented the actual goals from being met. Water projects were effected. At present, over 900 caballerias are under cultivation for irrigated miscellaneous crops. More than 1,200 construction workers make up an agricultural contingent. The sugar plan exceeded its goal by 170 caballerias of planted cane. There was 30 percent more tourism. Infant mortality is 8.6 per 1,000 live births. [Cuba Vision Network Spanish 2320 GMT 5 Jan]

The largest cane planting in the past 15 years was achieved in the last cold-planting season. Las Tunas Province attained the highest planting with 1,401 caballerias. A new machine that makes briquets out of cane straw has been installed at the Luis Arcos Bergnes agroindustrial complex in Villa Clara Province. The machine will save 5 tons of oil per work shift which equates to some 500 tons per harvest. [Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Spanish 0100 GMT 6 Jan] Ciego de Avila

Province production increased by more than 300,000 quintals compared with 1991. By the end of 1992, 130 caballerias of potatoes were planted, and yields of 6,500 quintals per caballeria are expected. [Havana Cuba Vision Network Spanish 2320 GMT 6 Jan]

The country's thermoelectric plants intend to use at least 1 million tons of domestic crude in 1993. In 1992, electric industry workers repaired 5,000 transformers and made 1,000 more, saving the country $500,000. More than 300 km of electrical lines were set up, and 45,000 new houses were provided with electricity. [Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks Spanish 0100 GMT 7 Jan] The metal recycling enterprise in Havana has supplied more than 30 factories with the raw materials they need. In 1992 the enterprise saved approximately $17 million in importing raw materials by recycling materials. [Radio Rebelde Spanish 1255 GMT 7 Jan] Combine operators in the small farming sector in Sancti Spiritus Province are cutting more than 6,700 arrobas of sugarcane per day per operator. In December, 35,700 quintals of tomatoes were harvested in Los Palacios, Pinar del Rio Province. The goal for January is 87,000 quintals. [Radio Rebelde Spanish 1800 GMT 7 Jan]

* Commentary Praises Lage Interview

93CA0036A Havana TRABAJADORES in Spanish 16 Nov 92 p 2

[Commentary by Renato Recio]

[Text] Carlos Lage's recent appearance on the program "Hoy Mismo" ["Today"], where he spoke with sincerity and realism, helped to deepen the Cuban people's conviction that we will emerge successfully from these difficult times.

Our revolutionary Cuba, so special and unique among the world's infinite variety of nations, is once again relearning another of its distinctive features: here the people are told the truth. The dialogue between leader and people is not sweetened with a single grain of demagoguery, nor is it adorned with a boastful salsa.

Many people who are called democrats go about this world covering up the truth from the people, promising things they are not going to deliver, turning gray into white, making ignorance and collective disinformation the mainstay of their power!

Here the details that darken our picture of reality are not hidden, nor do we gloss over our problems with doctrinaire denials; the pure language of truth gives the people a vision of what is essential, of those things that illuminate and give a decisive impetus to the dynamics of events.

The first question the journalists asked Lage in his initial interview was not just by chance the first, for it contained the very heart of all possible answers: how long might this special period go on?

In this case—as can be inferred from Lage's words—all forecasts may be at best simplistic, for the duration of the special period is not something that depends wholly on ourselves. This is a phase designed not only to avert the consequences of the disappearance of socialism from a large part of the world, but also to face the merciless offensive of imperialism against us. This has been favored by the stormy events of recent years.

But this special period, now facing its most critical phase, is not merely a tactical solution. Life demonstrates that the strategic reorientation of our economic development is full of elements that may always be effective guidelines for the revolutionary program.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the special period is simultaneously a time of survival and development; a phase which is not just defensive, for its nature is primarily creative and future-oriented. It is a phase of our revolution which can only end with victory, with the absolute strengthening of the values now being threatened: fatherland, nation, independence, and socialism.

The year 1992 is almost over. As its days passed and the people rediscovered their reserves of self-denial and their readiness for combat, the economic strategy pursued by the revolution showed that it was working in the midst of the worst difficulties. In the outside world the harsh rightist tide was at least beginning to ebb, as the capitalist restoration has nowhere enjoyed a bed of roses. The neoliberal model which emerged so forcefully after the socialist collapse has not gained prestige; the left is beginning to demonstrate that it can recover from its enormous traumas. Yankee imperialism is growing less and less like the all-powerful image it created for itself, and solidarity with Cuba is multiplying and growing even in the very heart of our great enemy.

In 1993, as Carlos Lage explained, we will face a very difficult year, which might be as hard as 1992 has been, or even harder, but none of the internal and external trends that somehow enabled us to resist in 1992 seem destined to be turned around.

This dose of rational optimism can be found in the open information that the secretary of the Council of Ministers gave the people.

This portion of optimism may be combined with the experience we have gained in these unexpected circumstances, and the certainty that we are quite capable of demonstrating the miracle of living without the permission of those who believe themselves the lords and masters of the world.

* Havana Province Produce Distribution Detailed

93CA0036B Havana JUVENTUD REBELDE in Spanish 22 Nov 92 p 2

[Article by Ana Margarita Gonzalez]

[Text] Who broke the food record in Havana? In my house there is no meat at all. Vegetables seem to have been swallowed up by the ground.

Such expressions have been heard everywhere during the past week, as almost all the media have published news of the surge in agricultural production. Many of us have already forgotten that these records and this progress also include tomatoes that were available at the start of the year and the plantains and bananas we have been eating frequently every month.

Potatoes have been the most positive crop for residents of Havana, for the distribution of this root crop has really been a "miracle" of planning. Every month, even if not very punctually in some produce markets, 2.1 million consumers in the city have received an equal quota.

Of course, the art of cooking is difficult now. We lack many products that up to two years ago were freely available, products that used to allow us to vary our everyday diet. Pastas, sausages, canned goods, and dairy products were basic items in our diet, but they have yielded their place to meats and vegetables with a planting, growing, and harvesting cycle distributed unevenly throughout the year, in accordance with the requirements of each species, so it is very hard to satisfy the tastes of so many people at the same time.

All this certainly does not mean, though, that agriculture is not responding to the population's expectations and needs.

The production of 11 million quintals of meats and vegetables that are expected to be harvested by the end of this year in Havana Province is not enough to feed the almost 3 million people in the city and Province of Havana, not to mention the transient population. In 1993, when these quantities rise to 15 million, we will be close to what is needed, and even then there will not be an overabundance.

During the first 10 months of 1992, 9,740,363 quintals of meats, vegetables, and citrus fruits entered the city of Havana; 56 percent came from Havana Province, and the rest from other provinces.

Of the total, 8,038,000 quintals were distributed to the people and the balance went to hospitals, day-care centers, schools, workers' cafeterias, and other social centers (this figure does not include tourism). Deducting 6.5 percent as market losses, produce for the capital came to approximately 335 pounds per capita from January through October, or, stated another way, 33.5 pounds per month.

The tomato distribution reached very high levels this year. I know many homemakers who still have enough tomato puree on hand to last until tomatoes from the new harvest are available.

Plantains and bananas are items that have been on our tables most often. A colleague at Granma nicknamed these our "Trojan Horse," as they are really the only crops that can be harvested at any time and in differing soil and temperature conditions, unlike the rest, and they help to stretch out our food supplies.

During the first months of the year there were also more carrots, lettuce, and beets than during the two previous years, and that was also true of oranges and grapefruit. A total of 2.24 million quintals of citrus fruits were delivered to the capital, while during the same period of 1991 that figure was just 1.8 million quintals. These fruits play an important role in the people's breakfast menu.

In our kitchens we think corn is very scarce, which is true if we take into account that this year's production, which was much higher than the 1991 corn harvest, was only sufficient to provide 10 ears to each consumer, while distribution was extended to 1,200 retail outlets; two years ago corn was only sold at 200 retail outlets.

We must realize, too, that this was not a typical harvest year. This summer's bean harvest was infinitesimal, and the pepper crop was almost completely lost. Fruits, which may provide a significant part of our meals, were also scarce. Condiments were in very short supply, and as the distribution network was expanded, the quantities available in each market decreased.

Some vegetables will begin to be harvested in December and there are plans to distribute condiments like garlic, leeks, parsley, etc. Plantain and potatoes will remain available in December, and people who are still owed potatoes from October or November will get them.

My local market is not one of the best favored in terms of distribution, but still I cannot ignore the productive results of the farmers, who are making what may be one of the greatest efforts in history, and are also having the best results to date. In Havana, above all, their progress has been amazing.

* Traffic Accidents Involving Bicycles Viewed

93CA0036C Havana GRANMA in Spanish 21 Nov 92 p 2

[Commentary by Juan Antonio Borrego]

[Text] Between January and September of 1992 there were 2,312 traffic accidents involving bicycles, independent of who was at fault.

The growing use of this means of transportation, especially in big cities, forces the drivers of other vehicles to share the roads with bicycles, which are more fragile, and at times are operated by people who are not fully in control of them, or who pay insufficient attention to traffic laws.

These factors, plus the expected increase in the number of bikes in use, mean that bikers, drivers, and pedestrians must all understand the responsibility we share when we use the streets, as there are frequent violations of basic traffic safety rules.

The situation in the city of Havana merits a separate paragraph. In Havana there are over 700,000 bicycles, using a street system that is highly complex, despite the substantial decline in the number of automotive vehicles in use as a result of current restrictions.

National Traffic and Transportation Week is to be observed from tomorrow until 28 November, and within this week, the Conference on Bicycles, an Option for the 21st Century, may serve as a forum for reviewing and expanding this topic. However, this is not an issue that is just relevant this week, or during one conference; it is an everyday matter. Everyone must be aware of the responsibility that each individual bears to obey current traffic regulations.

* Higher Education Adjustments Respond to Needs

93CA0036D Havana TRABAJADORES in Spanish 10 Nov 92 p 5

[Interview with Minister of Higher Education Fernando Vecino Alegret by Edda Diz Garces in Havana; date not given; first paragraph is TRABAJADORES introduction]

[Excerpts] In a conversation lasting almost two hours with Dr. Fernando Vecino Alegret, minister of higher education, he answered a number of questions about this important level of education. Our first question was: What is the situation in higher education during the present academic year?

[Vecino Alegret] Even though this academic year began in conditions that were even more difficult than in the former period, so far we have not experienced more severe cuts than last year, when there was no substantial effect on the quality of education because of our diminished resources.

But if the energy allocations are reduced, we will have to make some changes that may create a need to intensify the teaching process, with the principal materials taught in fewer classes. Ultimately we might change the system of grants to courses given by session, and introduce free education in some fields in which there is experience; weekends would be used, and we would try to bring the professors closer to where the students from other provinces are living. That is still hypothetical, something to be done when there is no other alternative; decisions will have to be made in each center, in each territory, with the resources they have available.

This will not be a general step taken throughout the entire country, and there are even some fields that, because of their vital impact on our development, will continue as they have in the past, for as long as we can do that.

These are the most disturbing cuts, for we have arranged for ordinary educational materials like pencils and notebooks, and we have managed to provide special items like chemical reagents, laboratory crystals, etc., which cost hundreds of thousands of dollars for just one course, by using foreign currency as our organization is authorized to do (from scientific tourism programs, contracting out of professors, selling software, skilled technical services, and other items).

We had been using 1,900 tons of paper essentially for books, and now we have 550 tons to last one year. This has caused a reduction from over 1,000 titles to 600, of which we produce 450 at the ministry.

I would say the nutritional level is acceptable, despite the fact that it has declined, but we had been preparing for this for the past five or six years by producing some of our own food, though not all of our centers do this to the same extent. A few even have dairies and cattle herds; some raise animals, and the vast majority produce specific amounts of meats, vegetables, and grains. This makes a definite contribution, and this program must continue to expand.

[Diz Garces] How have you been able to maintain quality in the face of so many limitations?

[Vecino Alegret] We used to waste electricity and fuel. That is obvious. But now a more conscientious conservation program has been started. This has enabled us, with great care and using a lot of persuasion, not to exceed our limits in training professionals. We have been greatly helped in this by the efforts and sacrifices made by workers, professors, and students.

Educational units have also played a very important role. These units represent a true universalization of higher education. When problems of limited resources began to grow more severe, we tried to strengthen our presence in production or service centers that were not to be closed. So we have a very strong relationship with the nutritional program, with tourism, biotechnology, and other areas, in which students have been placed along with their professors.

There are 220 educational units and 1,300 base labor units that are directly connected to the university. Here students play an active part in solving concrete problems, and acquire practical skills as well as theoretical knowledge as part of their training.

[Diz Garces] Will the courses for workers be maintained?

[Vecino Alegret] We would like to keep them, though there has been a tendency toward declining enrollment for these courses, because for some years now entrance tests in math and Spanish have been required. We could help by giving prep courses for these exams, to avoid an even greater decline.

There have also been cutbacks. Last year, evening and night programs began to be conducted on a per-session basis, and those that met on Saturdays are now given during the week.

[Diz Garces] Will university admissions continue to decline?

[Vecino Alegret] In Cuba there are almost half a million professionals who already fulfill the fundamental needs for many fields. Then there is our commitment to provide job placements for all graduates, which has been done with a high level of job satisfaction for everyone, with the great majority of job placements connected with fields they had studied. This has been done with the assistance of the central government, of mass organizations, and of the FEU [Federation of University Students]. This in itself forces us to continue to limit admissions. If we make such a commitment, we cannot in good conscience continue to graduate students and then not have a job to offer them.

In five years we have cut back from 310,000 students to 230,000 (most of them in courses for workers). Of this number, about 140,000 (80,000 with financial assistance) attend day classes.

During the 1992-93 school year university admission plans declined substantially, and this will continue in the next school year, even though Cuba, while it is facing difficulties, is continuing to develop specific fields, and so in some courses there has even been an increase in admissions, in fields like pharmacology and biological sciences.

Massive employment of graduates in basic labor programs promotes useful placements of many graduates, enabling us to keep a high level at the university at the present time, and this helps to enrich the fundamental development program and meet professional replacement needs. In addition, young people are being placed as trained workers and are moving through different positions in an organization.

But we cannot continue to train engineers and other professionals as if nothing at all had happened in Cuba, because factories really have closed, there has been a contraction of development. At the same time, the university must increase its efforts to prepare graduates; it must ensure their continuing education, through a fourth level, postgraduate education, so our staff will not be left idle.

[Diz Garces] Are these continuing education programs designed to respond to specific problems and needs?

[Vecino Alegret] Professional advances have increasingly been made in fields related to production, services, and scientific research, with priority objectives and issues established on a national and territorial level.

Such concepts are seen, for example, in the improvement of labor resources under the "Turquino" Plan, the researchers of the western scientific pole, and the skilled force working in the nutritional program.

In the majority of the provinces commissions led by PP [People's Government] groups have been set up to implement a strategy to develop the territory's skilled labor force, and the university has had a growing involvement in this.

There have been advances, but more could be done. I do think some possibilities of advancement are overlooked for professionals, and even for midlevel technicians and skilled workers in labor centers that have been idled or have had cutbacks. [passage omitted]

[Diz Garces] How is the conversion of the universities into research centers going?

[Vecino Alegret] In general, the results are positive. When we go to a province we see that one of its pillars of scientific and technical development is the university, because of its ongoing commitment to central and territorial programs.

We are playing an active role in the nation's major programs, and internally we are concentrating on 10 top-priority areas: diagnostic and medication resources for animal health; plant biotechnology; medication and diagnostic resources for human use; animal nutrition; medical and biotechnological equipment; integrated efforts against plant pests and disease; recovery and fabrication of parts and equipment; rational use of energy and of nonconventional energy sources; biofertilizers and biostimulants for agricultural use; and zeolite and other minerals.

We are studying the feasibility of including a tourism program. We are also thinking about a nickel and cobalt mining program, and we are emphasizing research on social sciences, and working in the fields of higher and postgraduate education.

Our centers have achieved important scientific results in various spheres. I will mention just one of the most recent: the construction at Oriente University, in collaboration with various institutions, of a nuclear magnetic resonance tomographic facility. This is one of the five most complex and most expensive pieces of equipment used in medical diagnosis. [passage omitted]

Inter-Caribbean Affairs

Officials Discuss Caricom Issues

FL0601183093 Bridgetown CANA in English 1754 GMT 6 Jan 93

[By Rickey Singh]

[Text] Bridgetown, Barbados, Jan 6, CANA—The president of the Caribbean Development Bank [CDB] and top officials of two of the region's leading labour and business organisations have warned that the Caribbean Community (Caricom) has no alternative but to "speedily" come to terms in 1993 with the reality of a single European market and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Fears of significant job and trade losses and of general economic "marginalisation" must urgently give way to "rational, effective and collective responses," according to CDB president, Sir Neville Nicholls, Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce [CAIC] executive director, Pat Thompson, and the secretary-treasurer of the Caribbean Congres of Labour [CCL], Kertis Augustus.

They stated in interviews with the CARIBBEAN NEWS AGENCY (CANA) this would require a "concerted effort" by Caricom governments to have "systematic and serious dialogue" with their social partners, especially in the fields of labour and the private business sector.

With unemployment high in some of the 13 community member countries, Augustus said the CCL was prepared to "consider a wages freeze" to help attract new investments and "economic recovery." But the CCL's secretary-treasurer has emphasised that "such a consideration would have to be based on firm, honourable guarantees by employers in the public and private sectors against retrenchement or any reductions in existing benefits." Further, he said, the challenges facing the region "make it imperative that the governments of Caricom cease treating with the social partners on an ad hoc, convenient basis. [sentence as received]

"If we in the labour movement are expected to act responsibly, show good faith and do all that we keep hearing we should do from those in power, then," said Augustus, "serious, regular dialogue, must be the norm....

"The tripartite form of consultation, involving government, labour, and the business sector must be a permanent feature."

In echoing the sentiment for structured, permament dialogue between governments and the social partners, Thompson told CANA he was "pleased" to note that the Caricom Secretartiat had already taken "a most welcome initiative" for an important two-day meeting with top representatives of the region's commercial, industrial, and manufacturing sectors in February. For the first time in the 20-year history of Caricom, the secretary general of the community, Edwin Carrington, has decided to start the process of "regional consultation" with the business sector at a meeting fixed for February 8-9 to consider a "strategy and action plan for '93."

Caribbean-Europe relations, with a special focus on the future of agricultural exports like sugar and bananas to the European market; NAFTA and Caricom, and the functioning of the four-member Caricom Bureau, headed by Trinidad and Tobago prime minister, Patrick Manning, are among major agenda items for the meeting in Georgetown.

"We of the private sector are attaching much importance to this forthcoming meeting which Carrington has organised in consultation with the CAIC," said Thompson.

The Caricom Secretariat-private sector meeting will coincide with separate meetings in Georgetown of the CAIC and the Caribbean Manufacturers Association, and subsequently a joint meeting with President Cheddi Jagan.

Lamenting the lack of properly organised, collective, lobbying overseas by Caricom, particularly in Washington, Thompson said that the community must move swiftly away from the "rhetorical mould" and on to the fast-track of "collective action" to win the best possible concessions from both Europe and North America in the areas of trade and investment. The new secretary general, he said, knows of the private sector's reservations about the Caricom Bureau and of the preference for the Caricom Commission as recommended by the West Indian Commission.

But, said Thompson, "we are quite disposed to giving whatever co- operation may be necessary to make the bureau function as efficiently as possible in the quest to tranform Caricom into a single market and economy as the community have been discussing for some years now."

The CAIC official feels that one of the crucial issues that Caricom must resolve, "the sooner the better", is that of "reciprocity" in one-way duty-free arrangements with NAFTA, as exist under the Lome convention with Europe and the U.S. Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). Basically, argues Thompson, Caricom's negotiating position for NAFTA should initially seek to win the equivalent concessions granted Mexico, "but without reciprocity" and, ultimately, bargain for a much longer transitional phase in one-way duty free access than granted Mexico, "given our many disadvantages, including size and limited resources."

Immediately, however, said the CAIC spokesman, "we must be seen to be acting together to meet the challenges posed by the mega-economic blocs of Europe and North America by taking those decisions necessary for a single market and avoid the threatened marginalisation...."

President Nicholls of the CDB—the regional financial institution that has approved over 1 billion U.S. dollars in development aid for the Anglophone Caribbean countries over the past 22 years—agrees with both the CAIC and CCL officials on the need for urgent collective responses to the challenges of a single market Europe and NAFTA. However, he feels the region may no longer have the "luxury of time" to vacillate over the choice, "very important as it is to us, of reciprocity in trade relations with Europe under Lome, and North America under NAFTA."

Under Lome and also CBI, the Caribbean currently enjoys one-way duty free concessions that may not be available under NAFTA and consequently placed at a serious disadvantage to NAFTA countries like Mexico. As President Nicholls sees it, the Caricom countries trade with the U.S.A. and Canada was so "substantial" that "we cannot afford to stay out of NAFTa. We have to concentrate in getting in as quickly as possible by

starting the bargaining process now and together before events prove to our further disadvantage."

Nicholls said that major Caricom partners like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago were already showing how anxious they were to settle the issue of membership to NAFTA.

"It's a pity," he added, "that for all the talk, it is Jamaica, rather than all of Caricom, that seems more keen in ensuring an ongoing lobbying presence in major centres like Washington."

Declaring that he was not "particularly sanguine" about the assurances given for the continuation of the preferential access to Europe of the region's banana and sugar exports, Nicholls warned that "unless we are on a preparation alert we could be faced with substantial social chaos with thousands of job losses."

He thinks that a combination of pressures from "insensitive special interest groups in the U.S.A." and European partners like Germany and Italy, could eventually "erode the special treatment accorded our agricultural exports into Europe with the U.S.A. even moving to have a ruling by GATT (General Agreement on Tariff and Trade).

Nicholls said that he did not wish to sound the "alarm bell" or project what some may consider a "gloomy forecast." Nevertheless, he said that at this stage the scenario for the Caribbean in 1993 was not a bright one. Much would depend on collective action by the governments and the relevant social partners to stimulate the productive sectors that have been on the decline within recent times, said Nicholls.

Barbados

CANA Reviews News Events of 1992

FL0701180793 Bridgetown CANA in English 1734 GMT 7 Jan 93

[By Reudon Eversley]

[Text] Bridgetown, Barbados, Jan 7, CANA—National preoccupation with a faltering economy, the resulting political fall-out for the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) government and Prime Minister Erskine Sandiford in particular, and concern about an upsurge in violent crime dominated the news in Barbados during 1992.

After the Sandiford government responded to the economic crisis in late 1991 by introducing an austerity programme, 1992 began amidst uncertainty for most Barbadians. It ended largely on the same note although, towards year-end, some observers said they were beginning to detect signs of an emerging optimism among the population.

The crisis, the worst Barbados has experienced in 26 years as an independent nation, stemmed from a worsening of two long-standing problems: a tendency for government spending to outstrip revenue, resulting in recurring fiscal deficits, and the country's trend of spending more on imports than it earned from exports, causing continuous pressure on the balance of payments and foreign reserves.

The austerity measures, introduced within the context of an 18- month International Monetary Fund-supported stabilization programme, sought to provide a sharp correction to both problems. With respect to the fiscal deficit, emphasis was placed on bringing it down from 8.9 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 1990-91 to 1 per cent by the end of fiscal year 1991-92, with a balanced budget as the target for the current year. The route taken was wide-ranging cuts in government spending and new revenue-raising measures. To stabilize the external sector, the government adopted a tight monetary policy, centred on raising interest rates, which had the effect of dampening demand in the economy.

As was to be expected from such a sudden and drastic shift in public policy, the social fall-out was enormous. With the downsizing of the public sector, 3,000 civil servants and employees of statutory corporations were thrown out of work. Those who were fortunate to retain their jobs suffered an 8 per cent pay cut and, then having to cope with additional taxes and a spurt in the cost of living, found themselves, like other barbadians, suddenly grappling with the challenge of living with increased expenses and reduced incomes.

As the economy contracted for the third straight year under the new strain of adjustment and the effects of a lingering global recession, the private sector, especially the manufacturing sub- sector, contributed to a growing unemployment problem. A few hundred jobs were lost as a result of cost-cutting by companies to stay viable in the face of escalating operating costs, a contracting domestic market for business, and business closures in a few instances. The trend was continuing at year-end. Unemployment, which climbed to a 15-year high of 23.1 per cent in September according to government estimates, was the most visible indicator of the extent of the social fall-out from the stabilization programme and the downturn in the economy.

Social workers spoke of the emergence of the "new poor" amidst reports that families were losing their homes because of inability to meet mortgage payments, households going some days without food, and parents forced to keep children from school because of no money to buy uniforms, pay bus fare, or get lunch.

However, as far as the goals of the stabilization programme were concerned, these were pretty much on target. Recording major improvements during the year were the government's finances as well as the balance of payments and foreign reserves, the latter recovering to

almost eight weeks of imports by the end of June compared with three weeks at the end of 1991.

The turnaround in the public finances, however, was achieved mainly through expenditure cuts as the hoped-for boost in revenue was scuttled by declining economic activity. Much the same also happened as far as the improvement in the balance of payments and foreign reserves was concerned. Up to June, earnings from exports had actually declined, and the turnaround was achieved largely through a sharp drop in retained imports, put at 20 per cent by the Central Bank.

Despite the obvious success of the stabilization programme, the economy continues to be saddled with an underlying problem of uncompetitiveness. Correcting this defect will be critical to putting Barbados on a path to recovery and sustained growth, and enabling the island to participate fully in a global economy that increasingly is becoming free trade-oriented.

The Sandiford government, which so far has ruled out devaluing the Barbados dollar as a solution, has promised to address the issue in a structural adjustment programme to follow the stabilization period. However, with the imf standby arrangement ending in four months, observers have started asking questions about the next move, as the government is yet to spell out specific plans for turning around the sluggish export sectors of sugar, tourism, and manufacturing.

Meantime, sugar fell deeper into crisis in 1992. The company that runs the industry was placed in receivership by the state-owned Barbados National Bank (BNB) for outstanding debts following a problem-plagued harvest that saw output falling to a 60-year low of 53,990 tonnes, just enough to satisfy preferential export markets. Much doubt hangs over the industry's future.

Manufacturing also plunged further into crisis as the sector came under government pressure to shift from a traditional bias towards import substitution to one emphasizing exports. Output up to September 1992 was down 8 per cent compared with the same period in 1991. Manufacturing spokesmen, citing the removal of duty free concessions on imported inputs as an unwelcome new burden, have predicted further slippage in 1993.

Tourism, battered by the global recession which softened demand for international travel, also fared badly for most of the year. There were signs of a pick-up in the last quarter but hoteliers continued to make a case for concessions, saying burdensome taxes were making Barbados uncompetitive as a holiday destination.

Against this backdrop, there were differing assessments of the island's 1992 performance and its prospects in 1993. The Central Bank said in early October that the economy had continued to decline in the first nine months of 1992 but that the three-year downturn had started to show signs of bottoming out during the third quarter. The Central Bank, however, shied away from providing an estimate of the decline.

Later the same month, opposition leader Henry Forde, addressing the annual conference of his Barbados Labour Party (BLP), said the economy had contracted by as much as 10 per cent between January and September. But he did not say how he arrived at that figure. Nor did Prime Minister Sandiford shed any light on the matter in his Christmas address. Sandiford, who in March had forecast that real output would grow in 1992 by 1.2 per cent, merely said: "We have survived 1991 and 1992. With faith we will do better in 1993, hopefully with the international recession coming to an end, and growth returning to our economy."

Nothwitstanding the current difficulties and the human suffering they had brought, Barbados maintained for the second straight year its top rating by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as the developing country providing the highest quality of life for its people. The measurement used was the Human Development Index (HDI), covering such considerations as the infant mortality rate, and access to health care and education. The HDI was developed by UNDP as an alternative to per capita GDP, one of the yardsticks used to measure development.

Prime Minister Sandiford continued in 1992 to receive most of the blame for the economic crisis. His critics contended the government could have taken firmer corrective action before it did, but with a looming general election, had dilly-dallied causing further deterioriation in the economy. Accusations also continued that Sandiford did not level with Barbadians about the state of the economy during the January 1991 general election campaign. He had fought the campaign on the economy's 1989 record performance and had sidestepped questions about slippage in 1990, saying that final economic figures were not then ready.

After Barbadians reacted with outrage to the austerity measures, there had been constant rumours that some members of the government and ruling party were not happy with Sandiford's leadership. At one stage, there was even talk of a move to replace him. The clearest sign of such dissatisfaction came on All Fool's Day when Harold Blackman, Sandiford's deputy in the Ministry of Finance, abruptly resigned as minister of state. He blasted Sandiford's leadership days later during the 1992 budget debate, and portrayed his former cabinet colleagues as spineless.

"Every single member of the front bench, Mr. Speaker, every single one of them, believes that the prime minister should move from being prime minister.... And on the back bench every single one with one exception believes that he should no longer be minister of finance," said the fiery St. Philip south MP [Member of Parliament].

Blackman proved a thorn in Sandiford's side for the rest of the year, despite an attempt by the ruling party to censure him. Addressing a DLP constituency branch meeting in August, Blackman apologised to Barbadians for "lying" to them about the economy as a member of

the DLP platform during the 1991 general election campaign. Claiming he had been misled by Sandiford, he said his subsequent appointment as deputy finance minister had opened his eyes to "a lot of things" about the economy.

Anglican Bishop Drexel Gomez used his charge to the annual meeting of the policy-making synod in May to call for fresh elections "on moral grounds" as a way out of the crisis. Gomez said the DLP government had not been candid with Barbadians about the state of the economy during the 1991 general election and also had failed to accept responsibility for the crisis.

He appealed to DLP parliamentarians in particular to treat the issue of fresh elections as one of "moral consciousness," warning them "the present mood in the country does not augur well for the future." But Gomez too had his own troubles. The bishop's authority came under serious challenge following a Privy Council ruling against him in case brought by a priest. Shortly afterwards, Gomez decided to call its quits after 20 years as bishop and return to his native Bahamas.

Sandiford also had to contend in 1992 with quiet hostility from the private sector which made clear in late 1991 that it had no confidence in his leadership and that he should resign. The private sector subsequently toned down its criticisms, but nothing suggested it had reversed its position. The stand-off between the prime minister and the private sector raises questions about the chances of success for a key objective of the current adjustment programme, which is, making the private sector the engine of future growth. With no confidence in the government, the local private sector is unlikely to take risks in productive investments which are essential in fuelling growth.

Indeed, except for a major golf course project which is expected to start this year, Barbados has not been attracting any substantial new private investment. Harold Blackman emphasized this point in a year-end radio interview in which he predicted 1993 will be gloomier for Barbados as long as Sandiford remains at the helm.

As for Sandiford, he responded at length to the criticisms of his leadership in a speech to the DLP's annual conference at the end of August. Restating he had no intention of resigning because he was not elected in a corporate board room, Sandiford accused the private sector of choosing "the rocky road of confrontation." He also said a few months before the last general election the then all-white private sector leadership had plotted to engineer the downfall of the DLP government in the hope of securing the election of the Barbados Labour Party "which they know they can better control."

"I have never initiated any confrontation with the business sector, with the manufacturers, with the church, with white people or any other people," sandiford [passage indistinct] and not "sectoral self-interests which do not contribute to national policy objectives."

In a stinging attack on Blackman, Sandiford said the former minister had been "untruthful" in his accusations and announced he was seeking to replace Blackman as the DLP candidate in the stronghold St. Philip South constituency at the next general election. Sandiford also said the party would make a fresh attempt to discipline Blackman which, party sources indicated, includes a strong possibility of expulsion from the DLP.

The first attempt failed because of a defect in the motion of censure brought by Sandiford's St. Michael South constituency branch. Blackman was still a DLP member at year-end, albeit on the sidelines, but he said 1993 would be decisive for him.

With the government looking to tourism to lead the economy to recovery over the short-term, an upsurge in violent crime, including a few widely publicised attacks against visitors, threatened to hurt such prospects. After a bus carrying cruise ship excursionists was shot at and an attempted robbery occurred at the home of one of its diplomats, the United States in April issued a travel advisory alerting prospective visitors to the danger of crime on the island.

The decision brought an angry reaction from the Barbados Government, with Tourism Minister Wes Hall describing the advisory as an "attempt to kill the goose that lays the golden egg." Nevertheless, tourism officials rushed to calm anxieties in a marketplace that is Barbados' principal source of tourists. The following month, the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office also put out an advisory, informing British travellers that crime was on the rise in Barbados and they should be careful.

The Barbados Government responded to the escalation of crime by instituting joint police and Army patrols. The population generally reacted by calling for a tough line against criminals, including the resumption of hangings and floggings with the dreaded cat-o'-nine tails. The authorities did move to reintroduce hangings by announcing that two condemned murderers—among five who broke out of prison in September 1991—were to be executed on May 25. The plan, however, was put on hold when lawyers filed consitutional motions seeking to block the executions. The case, thrown out by the high court, was pending appeal at year-end.

Plans to reintroduce floggings with the cat-o'-nine tails also were torpedoed by an appeal court ruling that such floggings were unlawful. Justice Minister Keith Simmons promised in September to move swiftly to amend the Prison Act to facilitate such punishment. At year-end, however, the promise remained unfulfilled. Crime continued to be a concern at year-end but the authorities appeared to have the situation under control.

Grenada

CANA Reviews Main Features of 1992

FL0501162793 Bridgetown CANA in English 1406 GMT 5 Jan 93

[By Richard Simon]

[Text] St. George's, Grenada, Jan 5, CANA—Grenadian trade unions hope this year won't be like 1992. "1992 has been a difficult year for Grenada as a whole and workers in particular," says Luret Clarkson, head of the powerful Public Workers Union (PWU). It was a year of further job losses and tough bargaining for public sector workers—with a government bent on trimming costs under a "home- grown" Structural Adjustment Programme [SAP].

Negotiations between the Nicholas Brathwaite administration and four public service unions were a main feature of 1992. Prime Minister Brathwaite and other members of his cabinet appealed for national understanding and patience among public servants who complained they had waited three years without a salary agreement, while the cost of living rose.

Brathwaite said: "No one denies that the standard of living of workers is affected when a country is forced to make adjustment in difficult economic times." But he argued there were no good alternatives to taking the tough measures under the SAP.

"If this government pays any more than 5 million dollars (1 East Caribbean dollar = 37 U.S. cents) for increased salaries in 1992, this island will face a bleak economic future which will bring misery to the vast majority of its people," he said.

Finance minister at the time, George Brizan, allocated EC5.2 million dollars in his 1992 budget for settling the wage war. The move angered union leaders, who describe the action as arrogant, accusing the government of not bargaining in good faith.

Noting that the wage increase offered by the government was against the advice of international lending agencies, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World BAnk, Brathwaite said: "Grenada is the only country to give a wage increase when it is undergoing a Structural Adjustment Programme." The government originally offered a zero per cent pay hike for 1990, 2.5 per cent for 1991, and a similar amount for 1992, but later revised its offer to include a lump sum payment of EC750,000 dollars for 1990, which was not considered a part of the overall wage increase. The unions rejected the offer as too low.

Brizan retorted: "Where will the government get EC20 million dollars in 1992 and about EC20 million in 1993? Government revenues do not fall from the sky. They come from taxes paid by the public and by businesses," he said, noting that Grenada has no budgetary savings. He pointed out that already the 1992 budget was projecting a deficit which government would have to close by borrowing—an option that had placed the country in more financial difficulty.

"The question members have to ask is: Which is better, to get your monthly pay plus a moderate increase or take action that can result in no pay at all," he said, adding that "any unreasonable action by the unions can force grenada into the International Monetary Fund (IMF)."

Two months later the four public sector called a "cessation of hostilities" because, as one spokesman said, "the government has announced its intention to go back to the negotiating table to look at new proposals." But on May 12 a six-hour meeting failed to resolve the differences. Both sides were still holding on to their previous positions, the government offering 10.8 million dollars and the unions seeking EC14 million dollars.

Following a series of work stoppages including a one-day strike, the four unions balloted their membership to decide whether to accept the administration's offer. On May 30 Grenada's 6,600 strong public service voted to accept the government's pay offer of zero per cent for 1990, 2.5 per cent for 1991, and 2.5 per cent for 1992 to be paid in a mixture of cash and bonds over five years.

Shortly after the settlement of the dispute, Prime Minister Brathwaite announced a major cabinet reshuffle. Brizan was sent to agriculture taking with him lands, forestry, fisheries, energy, production, trade, and industry. The prime minister took the Finance Ministry in addition to external affairs, Carriacou affairs, national security, political unification, personnel and management services, and planning. Brathwaite said the reshuffle was necessary partly because of "the weight of the negotiations" on Brizan.

Brathwaite, seeking an IMF approval for the SAP that would improve the chances of getting international funds for development, took Grenada's case to the IMF in July. An IMF team that visited the island soon afterwards "indicated they are satisfied with the programme generally but there are some areas that they will like speeded up, including the staff reduction policy and the sale of some assets," government spokesman anthony Boatswain told CANA.

The team voiced concern that the Nicholas Brathwaite government had paid out EC10 million dollars to public workers, but supported the government's plan to sell state assets. The privatisation plan faltered with the Central Garage Corporation (CGC) and the Grenada Electricity Company (Grenlec). However, the National Commercial Bank (NCB) was sold to Republic Bank.

One of the bright spots for Grenada in 1992 was the selection of Junior Murray to the West Indies cricket team to tour Australia. Murray, 24, was the first Grenadian to be named to the team after outstanding performances with the glove and the bat in the Red Stripe Cup and the Windwards Cricket Tournament.

1993 has started with good and bad news from Prime Minister Brathwaite. The good news is that the economic outlook for the island is more encouraging, with new thrusts in tourism—the expansion of the hotel industry—and the revamping of the agricultural sector. For unionists, the bad news is that the government will continue its retrenchment programme to reduce the civil service to 5,300 in two years.

Document Predicts Major Economic 'Turnaround'

FL0801003993 Bridgetown CANA in English 2124 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] St. George's, Grenada, Jan 7, CANA—A document reviewing the performance of Grenada's self-imposed Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), is predicting a major turnaround for the economy in 1994 when the programme ends. The document, prepared by economist Dr. Carl Mitchell, projected a three percent expansion in output next year. It also forecast an upturn this year, driven by an expansion in tourism and increased exports of agricultural and manufactured goods.

According to the document, "the main failure of the SAP is that its measures did not succeed in reducing the recurrent deficit." Otherwise, some other objectives were achieved. The Grenada economy, which grew by 2.9 percent in 1991, contracted by 0.4 percent last year. Per capita income fell from 4,900 dollars in 1991 to 4,860 dollars (one EC dollar = 37 cents U.S.). Last year's marginal decline in output was attributed to a 0.5 percent drop in tourist arrivals, a two percent decline in agriculture, and labour unrest, among other factors.

Construction remained vibrant, growing by 10.8 percent and there was a 25 percent increase in non-traditional exports which went mainly to the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. The balance of payments showed slight improvement due to an overall 14 percent increase in exports and a two percent drop in imports.

Optimistic about the short-term prospects for the economy, the analysis said "the major factors hampering Grenada's economic development are inadequate economic infrastructure and a shortage of skilled labour despite the high levels of unemployment." A case was presented for wage increases that are realistic.

Haiti

OAS Mission Banned From Provinces

FL0701222093 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 7 Jan 92

[Text] Since they have been officially banned from the provinces, the 16 members of the OAS civilian mission are concentrating their activities in Port-au-Prince. The restrictions imposed on the 16 members by the consensus government are based on a legal plane, while only three months ago, the same government had authorized the presence of such a mission in the country. Clarence Renois filed a report:

[Begin Renois recording] Since they are officially banned from going to the Haitian provinces, the 16 members of the OAS civilian mission sent to Haiti last October must concentrate their activities in Port-au-Prince. Three months after their arrival in Port-au- Prince, with the authorization of the consensus government, the civilian mission is today facing a legal problem. The argument presented by the government on 23 December 1992 says that without a legal basis in Haiti, it is impossible to let foreigners circulate in the country.

Since then, the mission seems to be keeping a low profile. One member of the group, however, remains positive. He says he hopes the problem will be solved within two to four weeks. Meanwhile, he says, we are forced to work on the spot, but maintaining contact with all sectors in Port-au-Prince and the provinces, he adds, asking to remain anonymous. In fact, everyday, files, documents, and complaints are submitted to the central office of the civilian mission on First Lavaud Street in Port-au-Prince.

What is the real role of this mission? The member says that there is indeed a misunderstanding of the task assigned to the group which, in the beginning, was to contribute to reducing cases of repression in Haiti, to contribute to the distribution of humanitarian aid, and to help solve the political crisis. We are therefore just observers, states one of the members of this mission.

Regarding the effectiveness of its presence in Haiti and the rather restricted number of its members, it should be recalled that the OAS foreign affairs ministers have recently voted for reinforcement of the civilian mission in Haiti. Having arrived in Haiti in October 1992 on the authorization of the consensus government, the mission is approaching its fourth month in the country without really being able to install itself, given the latest restrictions imposed by the government. [end recording]

Northern Districts Report Mixed Election Responses

FL0701230893 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 7 Jan 92

[Excerpt] Within the scope of preparations for the forthcoming elections, Jean-Robert Legros, electoral council representative for the Department of the North, visited Cap-Haitien this week. During his visit, Legros said he is satisfied with the way the Departmental Electoral Office [BED] of the North is progressing and asked the candidates to send their representatives to the Registration and Voting Offices [BIV's].

If election preparations are going well in the commune of Cap-Haitien, the situation is different in the commune of Bas Limbe, as the mayor of this commune refuses to relinquish such materials in his possession as registers

and electoral boxes—under the pretext that the constitutional president is not in the country. The Bas Limbe mayor has gone so far as to question what elections can be held in Haiti with Father Aristide missing.

In several communes of the Department of the North, the people are not very interested in participating in the upcoming elections. As late as 5 January, the BED of the North registered four candidacies, including one independent and two representatives of the National Patriotic Movement of 28 November [MNP-28], headed by Senator Dejean Belizaire. Jocelyn Jean, our correspondent in Cap- Haitien, will give us more details.

[Begin Jean recording] While several Communal Electoral Council [BEC] members are complaining about the indifference of the people to the elections, four candidates registered at the premises of the BED in Cap-Haitien. These four candidates are: Jackson Meleus Noel, a Senate candidate who has not yet revealed under the banner of which political party he will run; candidate for deputy, Francois Reynold Louis, for the first district of Saint-Raphael, will run under the banner of MKN, the National Cooperative Action Movement; candidate for deputy Romelus, for the district of Saint-Raphael; and Maxime Alliance of the MNP-28 for the second district of Saint- Raphael. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Senate, Chamber Candidates Register in Northeast

FL0701233193 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 7 Jan 92

[Excerpts] According to news from the northeast of the country, there are two new Senate candidates, in addition to Senator Amos Andre, who until now had been the only declared candidate for the 18 January elections. One of the two new candidates is Carl Charles Pierre, who until he registered as a candidate, had been working as director of the Customs service in Cap-Haitien since he entered the country in June 1992. Several residents of the Department of the Northeast are questioning the candidacy of Charles Pierre since electoral law requires that state servants resign at least six months prior to runing for election, while recalling that the Constitution provides that the government give them a certiciate of quietus if they had worked as public servants before the elections. Those who have taken this stand in the Department of the Northeast believe—when the time for analyzing the files comes—the electoral council will implement the provisions of the Constitution and the electoral law regarding cases such as Charles Pierre's. A total of 13 Communal Electoral Offices [BEC's] have already been installed in the Department of the Northeast. One of them, the Ouanaminthe BEC had many problems to work out because the president of that office had resigned. We are going to get more details from Fritz Abellard, our correspondent in Fort-Liberte. [Begin Abellard recording] [passage omitted] The declared candidates running for the Senate are: Amos Andre of the Nationalistic and Progressive Revolutionary Party of Haiti; Carl Charles Pierre of the Movement for the Establishment of Democracy in Haiti [MIDH]; and Michel-Ange Duchene, an independent candidate. It is these three persons who are in the race for this post, to replace Deputy Romulus Pierre of the first district of Terrier- Rouge, who died. Romulus Pierre was elected in the 16 December 1990 elections. The candidates are: Jean-Pierre Alexandre of the MIDH; Charlot [first name not given], an independent; Joseph Robens Robert of the National Patriotic Movement of 28 November; Andre Delice of the MIDH; and Leclerc Daniel of the Haitian Christian Democratic Party. Fritz Abellard for Radio Soleil from Fort-Liberte. [end recording]

MRN Applauds Parties Opposed To Elections

FL0701163093 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] Political parties continue to join the six parties that have denounced the illegal nature of the procedure set up to form the territorial assemblies and the unique electoral council. Following the Assembly of Progressive National Democrats, [former President] Leslie Francois Manigat's party, the National Reconstruction Movement [MRN] of Rene Theodore applauds the six political parties. The MRN says it has observed with satisfaction that several parties, who supported the Villa d'Accueil Agreement, have taken this stand and now stood aloof from the Marc Bazin government. Almost all the political parties in the country have kept away from the senatorial elections which will be held, according to MRN.

Rene Theodore's party has pointed out four major points it has noted in the country's political life. First, the elections, which will be held, will be immoral; second, according to MRN's own words, the government of Marc Bazin and the Nationalistic and Progressive Revolutionary of Haiti is a minority and isolated government which is committing a series of arbitrary actions in order to establish a dictatorship; third, at the current stage of the national life, it is clear that all political parties must proceed to stand in the way of dictatorship and attempt to establish the constitutional order in the guarantee of a democratic life; and fourth, all Haitians will (?be able to) reject these elections which (?will) be a blow to the sovereignty of the country.

Rene Theodore, who signed the MRN communique, finally says his party has reaffirmed its availability for a new democratic concerted action.

PAIN on Members Running Unauthorized in Elections

FL0701163193 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] In a communique dated 6 January, National Agricultural and Industrial Party [PAIN] President Louis Dejoie II says that it was on the radio that he heard that Raymond Piou and Gladys Laforestry had put

themselves forward as candidates on behalf of the party he leads. As president of the party, Dejoie advises all concerned citizens that the PAIN did not authorize those two people to put themselves forward as candidates in the 18 January elections.

According to the list published by the electoral council, Raymond Piou's name appears as senate candidate for the Department of the West, whereas Gladys Laforestry should represent the party as senate candidate for the Department of the Southeast. The PAIN communique does not announce what measures the party will take against these two members, but it points out that the managing staff of the PAIN would never authorize these two members to do what they have done given that the party already said it would not participate in the forthcoming elections.

Furthermore in the same communique, Louis Dejoie points an accusing finger at Deputy Pierre Simon Georges, Deputy Milcent Datus, Senator Serge Joseph, and Sen. Franck Leonard who represented the PAIN in the December 1990 elections and who are now defending the current government by encouraging the people to participate in the 18 January elections.

Once again, the PAIN communique does not mention the sanctions the party will take against the parliamentarians, the parliament is at fault; and reaffirms the line the party has always taken since 1956. That line asks the party to always defend human rights and the country's Constitution.

Jamaica

Tax Concessions Seen as Power Play by PNP

FL0801001793 Bridgetown CANA in English 2001 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, Jan 7, CANA—The lifting of Jamaica's income tax threshold from 14,352 Jamaican dollars (one Ja dollar = 4.5 U.S. cents) to 18,408 dollars annually means the number of wage earners paying no income taxes will increase by 15,000 to 40,000, according to the Jamaican Government. A new income tax regime involving the lifting of the threshold and a reduction in tax deduction from 33.3 percent of salary to 25 percent came into effect on January 1.

The official Jampress news agency said weekly paid workers would begin to benefit this weekend. Approximately 500,000 pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) employees will benefit from the tax concessions which also include an 8.3 percentage point reduction of the witholding tax on personal savings. The tax concessions, possibly the most popular initiative by the Peoples National Party (PNP) government since P.J. Patterson took over as prime minister early last year, were first offered as part of a social contract involving government, labour, and employers.

But trade unions, pressed by workers determined to catch up in real wages after years of pay guidelines and steep inflation, have so far been wary of accepting the social contract proposal. However, political analysts now see the tax concessions as a crucial factor in boosting the PNP's efforts to retain power in a general election constitutionally due by March 1994 and which is widely expected this year.

The PNP is currently favoured to hold on to power following the latest Carl Stone popularity poll which shows the PNP with an eight percentage-point lead over the opposition Jamaica Labour Party (JLP).

Salinas Announces Financial Support for Farmers

PA0701223593 Mexico City Canal 13 Television Network in Spanish 1300 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] President Carlos Salinas de Gortari announced on 6 January direct loans for the nation's peasants, which will allow them to compete on equal terms with Canadian and U.S. farmers within the NAFTA framework. Additional resources were also announced. Rural resources will be increased by 10 percent in 1993. Many of these additional resources are from private sources.

The measure assures that large land estates will not reappear while Article 27 of the Constitution remains in force. Salinas de Gortari said he is on the side of the peasants. An important factor, subsidies, will be increased and respected, in addition to the increases in resources. This will allow Mexican, Canadian, and U.S. farmers to compete under equal conditions.

The federal government will implement a direct support program for Mexican peasants so they can compete on equal terms with U.S. and Canadian farmers. President Carlos Salinas de Gortari made this announcement while serving as chairman of the first national assembly of Ejido Commissioner presidents. The group marked the anniversary of the agrarian law, issued by the Mexican revolution on 6 January 1915. The Mexican president acknowledged that in the northern nations farmers receive direct subsidies, some even in cash, to support their production. Here is President Salinas:

[Begin Salinas recording] We know that in the United States and in Canada farmers receive direct cash support. You told me: In Mexico support is through prices, so we, the producers, do not directly benefit from it. I have heard your demand. I have instructed the Agricultural Cabinet to give me a proposal for direct support to be handed over to Mexican peasants. [applause, shouts] [end recording]

In the presence of over 1,000 Mexican peasants assembled at the Los Pinos presidential palace, Salinas revised the 10 points agreed on by the federal government in 1992 to reverse the backwardness in rural areas.

[Begin Salinas recording] One year has gone by and the large land estates did not return; they will never return. Large land estates are prohibited by the Constitution and the law. The organized Mexican peasants will not allow their return. The Constitution now supports their struggles, the large land estates will not return to our nation's countryside. [applause] [end recording]

Salinas also promised to end agrarian underdevelopment by 1994, without leaving one claim unresolved.

Opposition Voices Pessimism Over Cabinet Changes

PA0701181993 Paris AFP in Spanish 2043 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Report by Victor Flores]

[Text] Mexico City, 5 Jan (AFP)—The Mexican opposition on 5 January voiced its pessimism over cabinet changes ordered by President Carlos Salinas. The Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) described the appointment of Government Secretary Patrocinio Gonzalez as "threatening because the government is showing a fist instead of an open hand."

Gonzalez, 58, former governor of the southern State of Chiapas, replaced Fernando Gutierrez Barrios, an experienced politician known for his negotiating ability and pragmatism in facing serious political crises. He resigned to devote himself to private life.

Porfirio Munoz Ledo, leader of the center-leftist PRD, said the appointment of the former governor of the State of Chiapas is "surprising and worrisome" because his background "makes him more of a repressor than conciliator and if there are any adjectives to describe him they would not be democratic or tolerant."

The newspaper LA JORNADA pointed out in a front-page editorial that the image of Gonzalez, who did graduate work in law and economics at Cambridge University, United Kingdom, is that of a politician who is "harsh and not very inclined to seeking consensus."

In reply to this the new government secretary during a news conference on 5 January said "such claims are unfounded" because in four years the official National Human Rights Commission sent only seven "recommendations" to him in Chiapas and "they were taken into account."

Chiapas, which borders with Guatemala, is one of the Republic's poorest states and the one with the largest Indian population. There were "multiple and continuous cases of repression" in this state. The main one being the 1991 detention and torture of 300 peasants in the Mayan city of Palenque after they had participated in a 71-day strike to demand the implementation of municipal works.

One of the new secretary's most noteworthy conflicts was his friction with Arturo Lona, bishop of San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas and defender of the human rights of Indians and promoter of the ideas and practices of the Theology of Liberation.

Influential columnist Miguel Angel Granados Chapa on 5 January said "it is frightening that a person with such a background was appointed" to head the Government Secretariat.

LA JORNADA on 5 January published an account on the "expulsion of Indian families, unjust arrests and jailings, disappearances, evictions, eviction attempts, repression of marches, and expulsion threats" during the government of Patrocinio Gonzalez in Chiapas.

Granados Chapa said Gonzalez has been a "rude" and "authoritarian" governor and recalled that "the four years of his government (in the southern State of Chiapas) was marked by permanent conflict."

*** Nahua Indians Win Project Cancellation**

93CA0040A Mexico City EL FINANCIERO in Spanish 28 Oct 92 p 29

[Text] San Juan Tetelcingo, Guerrero, 26 Oct (NOTIMEX)—After two years of mobilizations the Council of Upper Balsas Nahua Pueblos (CPNAB) has gotten the governor of the state, Jose Francisco Ruiz Massieu, to cancel the hydroelectric project that would have affected 45,000 local residents; it has also obtained a commitment from the federal government.

Members of the 37 Indian pueblos that make up the CPNAB met here to hail the cancellation and celebrate the second anniversary of their group, which they formed to fight for a complete and definitive end to the San Juan Tetelcingo hydroelectric project on the Balsas River.

After receiving a letter in which the state governor announced the cancellation of the project, the council members had their doubts. However, after the march for Indian dignity and resistance on 12 October, they were received in Mexico City by President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, who voiced his support for them.

The text, dated 12 February of this year in Chilpancingo, Guerrero, says: "Pursuant to the meeting that we held this past Monday, 10 October, and to the official letter issued by the secretary general of government, Carlos Vega Memije, I confirm to you that the federal government has told the undersigned that the work on the hydroelectric project of the Federal Electricity Commission, known as 'San Juan Tetelcingo,' has been completely canceled."

At this weekend's celebration part of the Indian council cheerfully displayed the document with the two signatures, which represents the biggest accomplishment of an Indian people anywhere in the world. Others expressed mistrust, however, because the document does not bear the seal of the Presidency of the Republic and does not announce a definitive cancellation.

Nevertheless, as part of the presidential decision, last Friday members of the organization and representatives of the National Indian Institute (INI) and the Social Development Secretariat (Sedesol) met to hear proposals and make decisions on short-term, alternative development projects financed by Pronasol [National Solidarity Program].

They also agreed that the Upper Balsas pueblos would lodge their specific short-term demands for resources and then plan for medium- and long-range funding. Once the latter has been defined, they will set up a regional solidarity fund agreed upon in a general assembly.

For the time being they said that they were demanding: drinking water, electrification, and the building of roads, bridges, schools, and health care centers, the approximate cost of which is 4.6 billion pesos.

The alternative proposed by the CPNAB, aided by the Group of Environmental Studies (GEA), and headed by Alfonso Gonzalez, an architect who has studied social anthropology and is a rural forestry promoter, is a project for sustainable development run by the Indians themselves. This is consistent with the Mexican Government's stand in Rio de Janeiro, inasmuch as the rights of neither present nor future generations must be sacrificed.

The GEA has been working on this for a year and half now. Without a budget, however, it can at this time say only that during an initial stage of six to eight months it will need the support of 10 paid researchers, plus material support, and per diem expenses.

The INI has already accepted the proposal but needs to do short-term planning in order to gain support from Solidarity, while it moves ahead with plans for undertaking projects in the medium term. "There is no problem with time periods or six-year terms, because the needs remain and the mechanisms too," Gonzalez remarked.

A hydroelectric project was first planned here about 50 years ago. The Federal Electricity Commission did not take it up again until the 1980's, eventually securing a loan from the World Bank and starting construction in 1990, but without notifying the locals who would be affected.

They learned of the project, however, and blueprints in hand, began mobilizing to have it canceled. When the specialists on the commission were forced to acknowledge the project, they said that only 17,000 persons would be affected. "But these are false data, because they come from a 40-year old malaria-eradication census."

El Salvador

Cristiani Denies Requesting Purge Extension

PA0701164893 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Alberto Villarreal report; passages within quotation marks are recorded]

[Text] President Alfredo Cristiani has described as speculation statements made by certain political and other sectors in the country to the effect that he has asked for a 17-month extension of the deadline for purging the military.

President Cristiani confirmed that the changes listed in the 31 December military reassignments order are the only changes to be made for at least another 30 days. The president said emphatically that he has not negotiated with the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front on the changes.

[Cristiani] "Everything was done in the 31 December order. As was stated in a communique, that was a routine monthly order. An additional order was issued on the same date, but it is being kept confidential by the UN secretary general.

[Unidentified reporter] "[Question indistinct]?

[Cristiani] "No one has said anything about 17 months. That is also a speculative date."

The country's political sectors had expected the military order to show important reassignments, but that was not the case. Some sectors feel the list does not go far enough. Cristiani added that he does not plan to change the defense minister or deputy minister.

[Cristiani] "I can say that so far there are no plans to remove or change the minister or deputy minister of defense. Nevertheless, every ministry is subject to change at any time."

For its part, the Armed Forces stated they would comply with orders issued by President Cristiani to implement the ad hoc commission's recommendations.

[Unidentified military officer] "The Armed Forces have been noted for their professionalism during the conflict and in the efforts to achieve peace. We are complying with orders issued by the commander in chief of the Armed Forces. I see no problem with the military institution's willingness to comply.

[Reporter] "Would the defense minister and deputy minister be willing to leave their posts?

[Officer] "We are speaking hypothetically, and I do not wish to express an opinion."

The ad hoc commission has already turned in its report, and the changes in the Army are reportedly to be made soon.

Cristiani, Ponce Address Atonal Battalion

PA0701161093 San Salvador Radio Farabundo Marti Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Armando Salazar report from Usulutan]

[Text] Approximately 688 members of the Atonal Battalion were demobilized on 6 January, which means the battalion has been dissolved. The last commander of that battalion was Lieutenant Colonel David Ernesto Navas Tenorio, who delivered a speech at the ceremony to dissolve officially this elite battalion stationed in Usulutan.

President Cristiani also delivered a speech at the ceremony, which was held at the soccer field in Usulutan stadium. President Cristiani congratulated the members of the battalion for a job well done. He also recognized the Armed Forces' exemplary professional conduct over the past years when—in his words—the country's institutionality was in danger. President Cristiani said he is proud of the Armed Forces' actions, which opened the path for the country's democratic development. He linked that democratic development with transformations aimed at achieving peace in our country.

Lt. Col. Navas said the dissolution of the Atonal Rapid Deployment Infantry Battalion [BIRI] was in compliance with the peace agreements.

President Cristiani held a news conference two hours later that ended just a few minutes ago. Regarding reports from New York in the sense that the gradual purge would end in May 1994, Cristiani said the process will end when the transition period ends. Here is part of President Cristiani's statement.

[Begin recording] [Cristiani] We believe the [words indistinct] should take place within the transition period, which was defined in the agreements.

[Unidentified reporter] When will the transition period end?

[Cristiani] According to the agreements, when the process of compliance with the agreement has been completed. [end recording]

President Cristiani's words imply—although not very clearly—that this process will end in May 1994. He noted, however, that the process is being handled confidentially.

President Cristiani said the Armed Forces is supporting the stabilization and democratization process in our country.

Regarding the electoral law, he said the criteria used for his observations are based first on constitutional principles, and second on respect for the consensus reached among political parties within the National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace and at the Legislative Palace [words indistinct] freedom of expression, as well as freedom of contract.

Defense Minister General Rene Emilio Ponce referred to the process of dissolving the BIRI. He said by the end of

January 1993 the Armed Forces will have approximately 31,500 soldiers, which is the number of troops the Armed Forces is committed to have by the end of 1993.

Gen. Ponce avoided answering questions on the purging process, specifically on the general order and the additional list sent to the UN secretary general, simply reaffirming what President Cristiani has said on the subject.

Ponce also referred to a statement made by retired Col. Sigifredo Ochoa [current deputy for the Nationalist Republican Alliance and vice president of Legislative Assembly], who expressed his discontent because the purging process began with mid-level officers, not at the top. Here is part of Gen. Ponce's statement.

[Begin recording] [Ponce] [Words indistinct]

[Reporter] Do you agree with Col. Ochoa, who in regard to the ad hoc commission said innocent officers are paying for crimes committed by others.

[Ponce] I do not think Col. Ochoa is well informed about the process. Although he describes himself as a professional soldier, his actions do not match his words. He had many problems while in the Armed Forces, and now he has many problems as a politician. We [words indistinct] the comments made by Col. Ochoa. [end recording]

Also present at the ceremony were Vice President Francisco Merino and Gen. Nelson Gilberto Rubio, chairman of the Armed Forces Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Democratic Convergence Rejects Government Proposal

PA0701153393 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSU in Spanish 1821 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Report by Balmore Parada]

[Text] Democratic Convergence [CD] on 6 January categorically rejected a proposal submitted by Alfredo Cristiani's administration to the United Nations. President Cristiani's envoys traveled to the United Nations on 5 January and submitted a proposal to the international organization for a plan to purge the Salvadoran Armed Forces on a schedule that extends until May 1994.

Mario Aguinada Carranza, leader of the leftist coalition, accused President Cristiani of failing to fulfill his obligations according to the peace accords. Aguinada said the ad hoc commission's recommendations should have been implemented 60 days after they were issued.

The ad hoc commission created by the peace accords evaluated approximately 2,000 military commanders, found that 217 of them had been involved in critical human rights violations, and recommended that they be removed from the military corps effective 1 January 1993.

[Begin Aguinada recording] A large number of these people have been transferred to the reserves. In other words, they no longer have a command but they are still under the military high command orders, still earn a salary, and, as a contingency, can still be recalled to active service. This is established by military laws. They are part of the reserve forces so they have not been entirely dismissed.

In addition, several officers have been exonerated and appointed to the foreign service. That is not a disciplinary measure, either. It is almost a reward. It has always been known that El Salvador's military attaches earn very good salaries, even better salaries than the ambassadors in many cases. Those who represent the Armed Forces abroad have not been dismissed. They cannot have been dismissed because their role is that of a military attache; in other words, they represent the Armed Forces. We must not forget that this political measure discredits the country because people who have been named by the ad hoc commission—and whose dismissal has been recommended—cannot represent our country abroad in a dignified way. Another group of officers named by the ad hoc commission will simply remain in their posts, accompanying the president until he concludes his term. [end recording]

The United Nations has reported irregularities in the changes announced in the last general orders issued by the Armed Forces for the transfer of personnel. The orders should have enforced the ad hoc commission's recommendations.

Rumors abounded among the country's political groups, implying that the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] was holding secret negotiations with the government concerning the purge, but the former guerrilla organization denied the reports. In addition, CD's Ruben Zamora defended the FMLN's position.

[Begin Zamora recording] We will accept the president's word that this was his decision. That is what was later discussed during meetings with the president of the Republic to review the Armed Forces purge. He said the [word indistinct] was decided by the president of the Republic. [end recording]

Ruben Zamora said CD will continue in the struggle to guarantee full compliance with the peace accords, adding that pressure will be exerted wherever it is necessary. CD will also remind the United Nations that it has an obligation to verify full compliance with the peace accords signed by the government and the FMLN.

UNOC Demands Cristiani Implement Army Purge

PA0701153293 San Salvador Radio Farabundo Marti Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Report by Flor Aleman; passage within quotation marks are recorded]

[Text] The long-awaited general order of changes in the Armed Forces issued at the end of the year has generated unhappiness among different sectors of the country, chiefly those who suffered from abuses and human rights violations by the Army during the war. Arturo Magana, leader of the National Peasant-Workers Unity [UNOC], said on 6 January that President Alfredo Cristiani's order does not facilitate the purge of the Armed Forces. For that reason the group members demanded Cristiani comply with all the agreements.

[Magana] "We call on the president to abide by the terms of the agreements. The president has a commitment to abide by the recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Commission. We also urge the president to publish a list, which some people say is being concealed. In addition to the list of promotions and discharges, some people say another list exists that cannot be divulged. Why is this list being concealed? That is the question we are asking. If indeed there is a list that cannot be published, the government has the commitment and obligation to make it public to avoid the sort of speculation that has arisen now."

Magana said Cristiani has merely made routine changes in the Armed Forces. Far from seeking to purge and reduce the Army, he has promoted a large number of officers, thereby showing the military institution has been strengthened. Magana added that it is clear the Armed Forces lack the will to abide by the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Commission. The failure to publish the list of officers to be purged serves to protect those who violated human rights.

[Magana] "The president is seeking to protect the ranking officers accused of abuse of authority and human rights violations and who still head the military institution."

Magana, who is also a deputy, demanded the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] Party explain the charges made by the Democratic Convergence [CD] that the FMLN and the Nationalist Republican Alliance government are negotiating the Army purge.

[Magana] "In addition, we feel the FMLN now has the obligation to give a specific explanation to the people. Days ago, the CD directly accused the FMLN of conducting a bilateral negotiation with the Cristiani government. Those negotiations sought to protect certain high-ranking officers to seek a way to ease the internal pressure within the Armed Forces regarding the decision the president had to make. The FMLN has not explained the CD charge. We feel the FMLN and the general command have the obligation to convince the people the negotiations did not take place."

Although the FMLN said on 5 January the purge in the Armed Forces is making slow progress, the UNOC does not share this view for the following reasons:

[Magana] "It is rumored some officers will be discharged in June 1994. That is routine, not a purge. We cannot accept that the defense and deputy defense minister remain in their posts until the end of the Cristiani mandate. That would not be a purge. That would be an abuse, a mockery on the people, and a violation of the agreements signed by the FMLN and the government."

Onusal Chief Comments on Peace Agreements

PA0701155493 San Salvador Canal Seis Television in Spanish 0200 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Iqbal Riza, chief of UN Observers for El Salvador [Onusal], has expressed doubts that the government really wants to purge the Armed Forces in a gradual fashion, the final purge taking place in May 1994.

The diplomat confirmed, however, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] is prepared to suspend the destruction of its missiles.

Riza on 5 January urged the FMLN to destroy its remaining weapons, regardless of international reports the government has proposed to the United Nations to purge the Armed Forces in a gradual fashion.

[Begin Riza recording] The destruction of the weapons was to conclude in December. A large portion of them have been destroyed, but there are still some weapons in the hands of the FMLN. We want to urge the FMLN to comply fully with its commitments [words indistinct]. [end recording]

Riza doubted the veracity of international reports on the purge plan saying he does not believe anyone knows the contents of the alleged government request to the UN secretary general.

[Begin Riza recording] [words indistinct] which has been published [words indistinct] New York. I doubt anyone really knows the contents of the document. [end recording]

The chief of the Onusal mission said there are some peace agreement points pending, such as the deployment of the National Civilian Police and the land transfer program. Regarding this last point, funds will be necessary to carry out all its phases.

[Begin Riza recording] The government has already established what land is ready to be transferred. Most of it is state land. There is also Agrarian Reform land and private property that has been bought. [end recording]

Regarding Onusal's mandate and its reconfirmation in the forthcoming elections, Riza said the UN secretary general will decide on the future of Onusal.

Broadcasters Issue Communique on Electoral Code

PA0701202393 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1200 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Communique issued by the Salvadoran Association of Publicity Media, AMPS, and the Salvadoran Broadcasters Association, ASDER; place and date not given]

[Text] In view of the unconstitutionality of the reforms of the new Electoral Code that undermine freedom of press, these two organizations wish to comment mainly on the precepts of our Constitution. Articles 6, 9, and 23 clearly point out all persons can freely express their opinions, that no one can be forced to provide services without his full consent, and that free contracting is guaranteed. Based on these articles, we want to refer to the observations made by the executive branch on the new electoral laws.

1. As for the damage done to the private image of candidates or leaders—dead or alive—as specified in Article 228 of the Electoral Code, there is an attempt to cause confusion by saying this measure is based on our Constitution, as it protects the honor and image of persons while it muzzles the media and keeps it from informing the public of any defects or crimes of the candidates. Furthermore, the candidates are placed on a level superior to that of any citizen, inasmuch as that article says violators of the provisions will be punished according to the common laws and the code. This is a violation of Article 3 of the Constitution which says all persons are equal before the law.

2. Paragraph 1 of Article 229 of the Electoral Code, which refers to free contracting, recognizes the contradiction that had already been pointed out by other statements issued by our associations. To that effect, it contradicts Paragraph 1 of Article 6 of the Constitution because it demands a report on the rates. In addition to the fact this does not make sense, this is a requirement that is impossible to understand. Undoubtedly, the observation eliminates the retroactivity the deputies wanted to impose on the rates back to August 1992.

3. As for the establishment of rates and schedules for radio and television in Paragraph 4 of Article 228 of the Electoral Law, it modifies only the final part in the sense that it eliminates the specific ban, and transfers authorization to the Tribunal, which will merely issue a negative ruling. Nonetheless, the regulations exist and violate the constitutional precept of freedom of expression.

These two organizations want to emphasize that we are not opposed to regulations, as long as they do not violate the freedom established in our Constitution. Therefore, we agree that any self- regulations [auto regulaciones], that are deemed necessary for union or political reasons, should be created.

These associations want to leave it clearly established that the principle of freedom will be defended at all costs, because they consider it is a basic political principle that differentiates democracy from a dictatorship, and they will make use of all available means to defend it.

Guatemala

* Serrano on OAS Human Rights Meeting

93CA0042A Guatemala City DIARIO DE CENTRO AMERICA in Spanish 9 Nov 92 p 2

[Excerpts] "I am pleased that since I have been president of the Republic not a single case of a human rights violation has been covered up, and the ones that have been reported to the government have had a judicial followup and at that point become common crimes subject to the courts," remarked the president of the Republic, Jorge Serrano Elias, in statements to reporters at the Presidential Residence on the occasion of his meeting with the members of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, whom he received at a special audience to discuss issues related to this topic.

The chief executive added that in most of the cases currently being talked about, his administration has had no direct responsibility, and many are closely tied to the conflict that has been going on in the country for 30 years.

He emphasized that his administration's policy is the correct one, as it attacks causes, not just results. It has thus persistently sought peace, because it realizes that all of these accusations will disappear when the armed conflict ends.

He added that the attorney general for human rights has been respected and that his administration has not ignored any of the attorney general's orders. He explained, however, that there are, of course, cases on which opinions can differ, such as that of Mrs. Maritza Urrutia, in which the administration took two positions: the one that it set forth in its report, on the basis of which action was taken; and a second, different stand. In any event, the case was duly pursued in the courts.

As for a purge of the security forces, the chief executive emphasized that this has been an ongoing process since he took office. The number of people who have left the security forces is public knowledge, as is the number being prosecuted when they are shown to be guilty of crimes. As a result, the administration is on safe ground vis-a-vis any international commission or agency, owing to its efforts to clear up the cases submitted to it.

Referring directly to the talks with the members of the OAS Inter-American Human Rights Commission, the president indicated that general issues were addressed, as he listened to several of them discuss the gains that they have seen in the country in the area of respect for human rights.

Serrano Elias underscored that he was pleased to hear these remarks because they represent a recognition of two uninterrupted years of work and decisions by his administration.

He mentioned that in addressing the issue of the peace dialogue, they were aware that the administration accepted the document on the human rights issue that the conciliator, Monsignor Rodolfo Quezada Toruno, submitted and that reflects an understanding between the parties. The acceptance came four months ago, but in spite of this the URNG [Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity] continues to cause problems.

The administration submitted a comprehensive document to end the conflict and asked the subversives to allow the UN to begin preparing the arrangements to verify and disband the guerrilla fronts. The president said that the authorities have in this way shown a great deal of openness and determination.

Among the issues discussed with the Inter-American Commission are the Grassroots Communities in Resistance and the Civil Self-Defense Patrols.

The commission was told that the judiciary has been given financial support to set up courts throughout the country and to improve criminal procedures so that the population is better protected.

President Serrano was asked about the mass media in Guatemala. His reply was that freedom of expression remains respected in spite of several situations in which action could be taken or pressure applied, such as the recent articles attacking him and his relatives, which are completely false. [passage omitted]

He thus said that he could not imagine why some people still say that the press has been pressured, when everyone can plainly see that it is free to print whatever it wants.

With regard to the attempt on the life of two reporters for the TV news program "Teleprensa," he explained that he has already ordered that appropriate measures be taken in connection with this distressing incident, and that the newsmen would be given the protection they need. [passage omitted]

* Budget for 1993, New Budgetary Norms Approved

93CA0042B Guatemala City SIGLO VEINTIUNO in Spanish 27 Nov 92 p 4

[Excerpts] Congress yesterday passed the General State Budget of Revenues and Expenditures, Fiscal Year 1993, which totals 7,945,591,048 quetzales. The Presidency of the Republic received an increase of 190 million quetzales, thus tripling its budget, said Deputy Juan Francisco Reyes Lopez (FRG). [passage omitted]

The full session of the legislature passed Decree 84-92, including the state budget that will go into effect on 1 January 1993. This decree was passed in less than an hour and without major debate, except for speeches by several deputies, among them Juan Francisco Reyes Lopez (FRG [Guatemalan Republican Front]) and Luis Flores Asturias and Aristides Crespo (PAN [National Advancement Party]).

Reyes Lopez had this to say: "The new budget rules contain innovations. An official who executes operational and investment plans and does not achieve at least 50 percent compliance will be fired, as we decided that the appropriate administrative action would be taken against him; the thinking is that someone who is unable to achieve that percentage had better be sent home.

"Transfers of investment and debt-payment expenditures to operations will not be allowed, thus preventing ongoing expansions of superfluous items such as confidential outlays.

"The three branches of government, as well as autonomous, semiautonomous, and decentralized entities, have a new obligation. The funding for payment of IGSS [Guatemalan Social Security Institute] and Services contributions may not be used for any other purpose. Any official who does so will be guilty of the crime of embezzlement, for which the appropriate penalty will be enforced.

"The Executive Branch must report quarterly to Congress on the execution of the budget, especially as regards operating expenditures. It must not give generic, complicated, and grudging information, however; instead, it must report on spending by department and by region, which will enable us to monitor the disbursement of budgeted funds.

"The legislature will have an obligation to report analytically on the execution of the budget. We succeeded in itemizing the appropriations for Congress (53,648,691 quetzales), for the Office of the Attorney General for Human Rights (16.5 million), and for PARLACEN [Central American Parliament] (7,512,929)." [passage omitted]

* Police Report 'Wave' of Crimes, Assaults

93CA0042C Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE in Spanish 6 Nov 92 p 8

[Text] The recent wave of assaults and robberies is cause for concern among the citizenry at large, as several groups have indicated that the security forces, which are in charge of bringing this situation under control, are powerless to do so, and they have demanded that the government redouble its efforts to combat the trend.

According to reports, common criminals and organized crime have hauled in more than 8 million quetzales from their misdeeds, striking at banks, stores, and individuals.

Besides this sizable sum of money, several individuals have lost their lives in holdups, to which we must add the psychological harm done to thousands of pedestrians and riders on urban and interurban buses.

In the opinion of the victims, most of the crimes have gone unpunished, since the security forces in charge of protecting the citizenry are not taking action to combat the high crime rate.

They add that people are afraid of walking along the streets and avenues of the city or of taking urban and interurban transit, where they have been targeted by criminals.

The spokesman for the police, Commissioner Freddy Garcia Avalos, said in response to a question that the police have redoubled their efforts to combat common and organized crime.

Garcia Avalos explained that so far this year statistics show that 1,868 assaults and 2,200 robberies have been committed in the capital and in the interior.

Comparing statistics, he said that in January 239 assaults were reported, and that the trend has been downward, as 149 were reported in September.

The statistics gathered by the police are objective, as the authorities never seek to falsify the data, since this serves no purpose, he stated.

He indicated that the authorities realize the dimension of the problem and are thus making plans to combat crime.

In the judgment of the police official, the problem of common and organized crime is complex, adding that citizens must realize that several factors are at work, including unemployment and poverty.

He added that the police lack manpower and equipment to do their job, which is to protect individuals and property. He feels that this is the reason why they have failed to achieve this goal.

Every day, some 3,000 police officers patrol, on foot and in motor vehicles, a city of more than 2 million. Their shifts last six hours.

The police apprehend criminals and turn them over to the courts. They are released soon thereafter, however, showing that the country's judicial system is not working.

Garcia Avalos feels that the plans of action against crime have been effective. The operations are assessed by the Directorate of Joint Operations (DOC), which analyzes criminal activity on a daily basis.

Garcia Avalos recalled that vehicle theft was on the rise several months ago. The police were thus forced to take urgent action, which worked well, as they eventually broke up the gangs of car thieves that were operating here at home and across borders.

He added that we should also acknowledge the work that the police did in monitoring and breaking up the youth gangs that were causing serious problems for the citizenry at large.

Agents from the Department of Criminological Investigations analyze assaults and robberies and have found that five percent of them involve car theft. The suspects are turned over to the courts but are released a few days later.

In conclusion, he said that the police take longer to arrest criminals than judges do to release them, even though the police try to furnish the evidence needed to convict suspects.

* Demography of Indigenous Peoples Examined

93CA0042D Guatemala City SIGLO VEINTIUNO in Spanish 20 Nov 92 pp 20-21

[Article by economist, public accountant, and auditor Rene Arturo Orellana Gonzalez]

[Text] As 1993 draws near, a year that the United Nations has proclaimed the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples, now is a good time to update our information on Guatemala's aboriginal population, which numbers 3.2 million, or 37.1 percent of our total population. There are 21 ethnic groups among the Quiche, Mam, Pocomam, Chol, Maya, and Caribe peoples.

Urban, Rural Population

Three-fourths of the indigenous population (81.5 percent) live in rural areas, in villages and hamlets, and on farms. Thus, many of the differences between Indians and non-Indians can be explained by this lopsided distribution, inasmuch as the rural areas are the most economically depressed and the ones most lacking in basic services.

Half of the rural population is Indian, as is one-fourth of the urban population, which lives in towns, municipalities, and cities. The indigenous population is increasing at the same rate in both zones, 1.4 percent a year, compared to the nonindigenous population's 4.2 percent and less than one percent growth rates in rural and urban areas respectively.

Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua are the three Central American countries with the highest rates of rural poverty, 85 percent each, compared to Costa Rica's 31 percent.

Of the 8 million people age two and over in our country, 2.8 million, 35.2 percent, communicate in an Indian language, mainly Quiche, Kakchiquel, and Kekchi. Some 44 percent of the rural population speaks an Indian language, while only 19.2 percent of urban residents do.

Regional Distribution

By analyzing the distribution of the indigenous population in the eight regions established in Congressional Decree 70-86 (Preliminary Regionalization Law) and conducting the appropriate sociological studies, we can learn more about the country's people and formulate

socioeconomic policies that will improve their living standards and cultural development.

The following are well known as home to the largest number of Indians: the southwest region (38.5 percent), the northwest (22.2 percent), the north (14 percent), and the central region (10.8 percent). Some 2.2 million Indians live there, 85.5 percent of the total. This general area stretches from west of Guatemala City to the Mexican border and northward to Alta Verapaz. There are few Indians from east of the capital to Honduras and El Salvador, and the remaining groups are being assimilated rapidly, such as the eastern Pocomam in Jalapa and the Chortis in Chiquimula.

Concentration by Department

Although Indians are spread throughout the nation, they are concentrated in five main departments: Alta Verapaz in the north, with 11.4 percent; Huehuetenango and Quiche in the northwest, with 11 percent each; and San Marcos and Quetzaltenango in the southwest with 9 and 8.8 percent respectively. A bit more than half (51.4 percent) of the country's indigenous population lives in these departments, which are marked by scant social and economic infrastructure, especially in the rural areas, and by meager basic services for their inhabitants.

A SIGLO VEINTIUNO article by Mario David Garcia reveals that 30,000 Indians from Huehuetenango, San Marcos, and Totonicapan, fleeing violence, poverty, and despair, have emigrated to Florida in the United States in search of a better life and have settled in Indiantown, a former reservation of the Seminoles.

Although the land in the northwestern and southwestern regions is mountainous, it is relatively more fertile than land in the east, where there is a shortage of water. This may be one of the reasons why the main indigenous settlements are still in these regions.

Indigenous Areas

Five departments have an indigenous population of more than 70 percent: Alta Verapaz, Chimaltenango, Solola, Totonicapan, and Quiche, and their inhabitants have had a subordinate position in the country's social relations.

Eight departments are mestizo, as the percentage of Indians is under 30: El Progreso, Zacapa, Santa Rosa, Jutiapa, Escuintla, Guatemala, Izabal, and Peten.

Another nine departments are regarded as mixed areas, however, since Indians account for between 30 and 70 percent of the population, as in Retalhuleu, Jalapa, Chiquimala, Sacatepequez, San Marcos, Suchitepequez, Quetzaltenango, Huehuetenango, and Baja Verapaz.

The Indian-dominated departments account for 20.4 percent of the total population, 43 percent of the Mayan population, and 4.1 percent of the mestizo population. In contrast, the mestizo-dominated departments account for 43.2 percent of the total population, 66.1 percent of the non-Indian population, and 11.5 percent of the Indian population. These departments represent the area in the country where conditions are best, although they leave much to be desired.

Fertility and Infant Mortality

The Indian population has a high fertility rate, with an average of 7.5 children per woman during her reproductive years (15-49), in contrast to 5.1 children for non-Indian women.

Indians account for one-third (31.1 percent) of the women between the above ages and for 43 percent of the live births in the republic. The fertility rates of Indian women are higher than those of mestizo women in all age groups, particularly in the 35-39 and the 40-44 categories, where the differences are 2.1 and 2.4 children respectively.

In the predominantly Indian rural areas the average number of children rises to 7.2 for mothers between the ages of 45 and 49, while the maximum in urban areas for women in the same age group, who are at the end of their reproductive lives, is 5.4 children.

Parallel to a high fertility rate, the Indian population shows a high infant-mortality rate, with an average of 76 deaths before the age of one for every 1,000 live births. This compares with the rate for non-Indians, 69 per 1,000. This represents an appreciable drain on our population.

It stands to reason that there is a greater risk of dying in rural areas because, by and large, the locals have very limited access to health care and education, remain on the sidelines of modernization, and do not enjoy economic, social, and cultural rights.

Conclusion

The Political Constitution of the Republic proclaims that the state acknowledges, respects, and promotes the ways of life, customs, traditions, social organization, dress, languages, and dialects of the Indian population. Nevertheless, the challenge that we face today is to develop a national identity that will unite us so that we can steer the country along the road to economic growth and social progress with justice, dignity, and solidarity, without having to give up our ethnic, linguistic, and cultural identity. We can do this by seeking a sound integration between "Indians" and "non-Indians."

* Situation of Indigenous Peoples Precarious

93CA0042E Guatemala City SIGLO VEINTIUNO in Spanish 3 Nov 92 p 4

[Article by economist, public accountant, and auditor Rene Arturo Orellana Gonzalez]

[Text] There has been growing interest lately in ascertaining the size, living standard, and characteristics of

our indigenous population. This is a result of the controversy over the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America; Agreement 169 on indigenous and tribal peoples, as proposed by the ILO [International Labor Organization]; the awarding of the Nobel peace prize to Mayan Indian Rigoberta Menchu Tum; and the United Nation's proclamation of 1993 as the International Year of the World's Indigenous Populations. These events have helped greatly to focus attention on the status of aborigines in Mesoamerica.

These events have had political and social impact, given the impoverished, disadvantaged conditions besetting the 21 ethnic groups living in Guatemala's rural areas and urban centers. Guatemala is a multiethnic, multicultural country where people of various social, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds live side by side and are now becoming increasingly important owing to the prospects of attaining political stability and economic progress.

Who Is Indian?

No socioeconomic study can ignore our ethnic makeup. Two groups have traditionally been acknowledged: "Indians" and "non-Indians or mestizos." The basis for the distinction is sociocultural, not racial; in other words, a person is placed in a social category on the local level, where there is an awareness of who is and who is not an Indian.

How Many Are There?

At the close of the 1980's the country's indigenous population stood at 3.2 million, accounting for more than one-third of the total estimated population of 8.7 million. There are thus almost four times are many Indians as in the first official census in 1880, when there were fewer than a million.

Growth Rate

From 1880 to 1989 the indigenous population grew at an average annual rate of 1.2 percent, compared to two percent for the population at large.

Over the past 10 years their growth rate has been 3 percent a year, also below the rate for the total population, 4.6 percent. If this pace continues, by 1993 (the year of the 10th official census) the number of Indians may approach 4 million.

Our Indians have traditionally been excluded and looked down on, even though they represent a major segment of Guatemalan society. They also do not enjoy the economic, social, and cultural rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic. Moreover, they have been discriminated against and oppressed, thus living in chronic poverty. Nonetheless, it is an irreversible fact that the Mayan peoples must play a major role as agents of growth in the country's future.

Numerical Importance

Although the number of Indians has grown over time, their share of the total population has shrunk by 32 percentage points, from 69 percent in 1880 to 37.1 in 1989.

Over the past decade their share fell from 42 to 37.1 percent, 5 points; thus, if the trend holds, they will account for 35 percent of the population in 1993. This is a result of the cross-cultural influences that have altered the ethnic mix of the population, which is marked by a striking trend toward social integration (see table).

Guatemala: Indigenous Population in Selected Years From 1880 to 1989 (in thousands)

Year	Total	Indigenous Population	Percent Indigenous
1880	1,225	845	69.0
1893	1,365	883	64.7
1921	2,005	1,299	64.8
1940	2,400	1,337	55.7
1950	2,791	1,497	53.6
1964	4,288	1,809	42.2
1973	5,160	2,260	43.8
1981	6,054	2,536	41.9
1989	8,664	3,216	37.1

Source: Author's compilation, using 1880-1981 censuses and 1989 national social/demographic survey, INE [National Statistics Institute]

Degree of Poverty

Indians are the poorest stratum of the population, as 89 of every 100 are poor, compared to 74 per 100 among non-Indians. This gap widens when we look at indigence (extreme poverty), the rates being 76.1 percent of Indians and 49.4 percent of non-Indians.

Poverty among Indians can readily be seen in the way of life among peasants, whose living standards have been lowered sharply by the economic crisis and inflation.

The conditions in which this population lives are marked by underconsumption, malnutrition, and hunger, unhealthy housing, disease, high infant mortality, illiteracy, lack of education, little involvement in social life, an unstable position in the economy, and perhaps a scale of values different from that of the rest of society (a culture of poverty). These conditions have given rise to an inequitable society marked by a trend toward greater polarization. The tragedy of this society is reflected in the many faces of poverty, most prominently: economic poverty, social poverty or discrimination, hereditary poverty, the new poor, or the impoverished middle class, the under- and unemployed, the widows and orphans of violence and armed confrontation, underage workers, and others.

Main Activities

Three-fourths of the employed Indian population work in agriculture, the rest in handicrafts, trade, services, and other activities.

Those who farm use very primitive growing methods, tilling tiny plots with very poor soil and earning a precarious income. Their most acute problem is insufficient land with steadily declining yields.

The pressure that the population is putting on the land is a nationwide problem that is illustrated by the following statistic: the availability of this basic resource of the natural ecosystem has fallen sharply over the past 50 years from 4.3 to 1.5 manzanas [one manzana equals 1.75 acres] per capita. The ratio must be even lower today, since not all land is agricultural.

The farms with less than 10 manzanas of land are known as minifarms and subfamily plots; they account for 89.6 percent of the country's farms but only 16.4 percent of the land. Each of these farmers has an average of 1.8 manzanas for his crops. Both this amount of land and the previously mentioned average are less than what is needed to sustain an average family of five—10 to 50 manzanas according to estimates by the Inter-American Committee of Agricultural Development.

As we can see, the basic problem facing Mayan Indians is their precarious economy, which stems from age-old conditions worsened by the economic crisis that began in the 1980's. This crisis has hurt them appreciably whether they work on their own or for others, either full- or part-time, because if they work in the official farm sector, they earn, at best, 11.2 quetzales a day as the minimum wage plus a bonus. This covers two-thirds of the cost of the basic family food basket. And because farming is seasonal, they do not earn this amount year-round.

What Can Be Done About This Deplorable Situation?

Given this outlook, it stands to reason that not much headway will be made in solving the Indians' problem just by raising their educational level or teaching them how to read and write. Educational and welfare measures can yield significant results only if they are combined with equitable social and economic policies that focus on the most vulnerable groups living in poverty-stricken areas, inasmuch as they, as human beings and as Guatemalans, are entitled to a decent standard of living in accordance with the principles of solidarity and social justice.

Nicaragua

UNO Holds Protest March at National Assembly

PA0701133593 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1830 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] National Opposition Union, UNO, politicians, headed by Virgilio Godoy, Alfredo Cesar, and Arnoldo Aleman, staged a genuine propaganda show [previous word in English] at the Managua Aguerri Theater on the morning of 6 January.

Approximately 1,000 people, mostly peasants, were brought from distant locations in the country to attend the event. The participants, who carried posters rejecting the executive branch's measure regarding the National Assembly conflict, listened to the UNO politicians' strident speeches.

At the UNO assembly, numerous charges of treason and maintenance of a cogovernment with the Sandinist Party were made against President Violeta Chamorro. The so-called leaders of the Permanent Workers' Congress, CPT, such as Antonio Jarquin, even proclaimed Vice President Virgilio Godoy president of the Republic. Attempting to convince the media the people were acting spontaneously, the UNO leaders urged the participants to march to the National Assembly to protest the executive branch's measure.

The CPT leaders took advantage of the occasion to report the alleged deaths of 200 former Nicaraguan Resistance members and labor leaders and irresponsibly accused Commanders Daniel and Humberto Ortega of killing Enrique Bermudez, young Paul Genie, and Arges Sequeira, who was a leader of the Agricultural and Livestock Producers Union of Nicaragua and the National Federation of Owners of Confiscated Property.

Several Region 4 activists participated in the political event and said they had participated in the recontra attack against military posts in La Dalia municipality recently.

The members of the so-called Democratic Force for National Salvation [Fuerza Democratica de Salvacion Nacional] and Patriotic Opposition Union, which are allied with UNO, distributed a communique at the event. In the communique, they claim responsibility for the armed actions in La Dalia, Matagalpa and areas near Condega and Esteli.

The communique, issued by the aforementioned organizations, calls on the people to topple the government of Violeta Chamorro, which they say is a military dictatorship. It also calls on the people to take the streets and participate in civil disobedience and armed insurrection actions. The communique adds they will carry out an offensive called Operation Bermudez 93 in January and February.

At the conclusion of the event at the Aguerri Theater, Engineer Cesar told reporters a merciless fight against the government and the Sandinists had begun on 6 January. According to him, the fight is necessary to reestablish democracy in the National Assembly.

[Begin Cesar recording] I believe the meeting on 6 January marks the beginning of a merciless fight to prevent the National Assembly from falling into the hands of the Sandinist Front, with the collusion of the

executive branch. The latter has disregarded the votes cast by the people on February 1990. In this theater, we have seen that all the democratic political leaders are totally committed to preventing the Sandinist minority, which lost the 1990 elections, from controlling the legislative branch. [end recording]

Godoy Rejects Executive Branch 'Coup'

PA0701195693 Managua Radio Catolica in Spanish 1100 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Nicaraguan Vice President Dr. Virgilio Godoy has described the executive branch's coup against the National Assembly as immoral and illegal.

Dr. Godoy said: As a communique issued by the National Opposition Union [UNO] bench established in mid-December stated, we are prepared to move to the opposition if UNO does not obtain its National Assembly Directorate seats in the 9 January elections.

Dr. Godoy, who was out of the country when the coup against the National Assembly took place, has returned and reaffirmed UNO's willingness to move to the opposition.

[Begin recording] [Godoy] I agree that the executive branch has no legal grounds to meddle so grossly in the affairs of the National Assembly. Furthermore, placing the National Assembly installations under police control represents a direct attack on the autonomy of the legislative branch and is therefore illegal.

I also want to say that with this action the government is not only on the road to a coup d'etat, but it is also losing legitimacy in national and international eyes because it is acting beyond the scope of its authority as an institution. Such actions could have grave consequences for the country at a time when it needs international aid.

[Unidentified reporter] It is true that this is a domestic matter, but considering the seriousness of the situation, what actions could world organizations such as the Latin American Parliament and the European Parliament take?

[Godoy] Their admonishment would be of a moral nature. There is no international penalty for this. Only the OAS is reforming its charter to strengthen a punishment system that would apply to governments that act against democracy. The Peru case has given the green light to the OAS to search for a new system that would allow international pressure to be exerted on governments move outside the democratic processes. [Words indistinct] says that the Legislative Assembly is autonomous [words indistinct].

[Reporter] You view the executive branch's action as illegal. Do you recommend that those UNO legislators who are defending legality and the independence of the branches go to the session on Saturday?

[Godoy] [Words indistinct] a government that rose from elections won with the support of UNO [words indistinct] surrendering the National Assembly to the parties that lost the elections, and it is doing so by using a mechanism that is neither valid nor correct, a mechanism that was established to apply only to an assembly meeting for the first time. This must be done under the Supreme Electoral Council [words indistinct].

In this case they have convoked three Sandinists: [name indistinct], the daughter of former Vice President Sergio Ramirez, and the successor of Commander Carlos Nunez Tellez [words indistinct], and another person who is at home because he is ill and who cannot attend and has no intention of attending meetings [words indistinct].

[Reporter] Now that the Sandinist Front has seized the legislative branch, the only one it was missing, what do you think will happen, in addition to the moral penalties you mentioned and the suspension of international economic aid to Nicaragua?

[Godoy] I have been reviewing all that has been said throughout the conflict between the executive and legislative branches, especially the so-called war of daggers between [Presidency Minister] Antonio Lacayo and [National Assembly President] Alfredo Cesar. I remember that UNO issued a statement in December 1992 noting that it would not accept a [words indistinct]—or whatever you want to call them—deputy becoming president of the new board of directors [words indistinct] of the coalition that won the elections.

If things work out that way and acquired rights are not acknowledged, then [words indistinct] to move right away to the opposition because the Sandinist Front would have become the governing party. The mask will then finally fall off and the nation and world will know what is happening in Nicaragua. [end recording]

Chamorro Criticizes Ortega Year End Message

PA0701155593 Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 6 Jan 93 p 7

[Letter from President Violeta Chamorro to Sandinist National Liberation Front Secretary General Daniel Ortega in reply to his New Year message, issued in Managua; date not given]

[Text] Secretary General
Sandinist National Liberation Front
Managua
Mr. Daniel Ortega:

I would like to refer to your recent year end statements, which I had the opportunity to read in the 31 December edition of BARRICADA. I feel the need to reply to your statements because they tarnish the prestige our country has been able to gain before the international community after years of struggling for democracy. In addition, your

statements also tend to confuse the people who today more than ever are entitled to the truth.

In stating that 1992 was one of the "saddest," "most repressive," "frustrating", and "insecure" years in our history, you seem to forget that the really sad, repressive, frustrating, and insecure years for all Nicaraguans was when you as president of Nicaragua led us all toward war, death, press censorship, exile, church persecution, rationing, conscription, uncontrolled inflation, and extreme poverty.

You should never forget that during your administration, our standard of living dropped dramatically to levels comparable to those of Haiti. You should never forget that during your government any worker who decided to protest, thus using his right to strike, was repressed and threatened with having his hands cut off. Nor should you forget that you left this country with a debt amounting to more than $10 billion. Each Nicaraguan was left with a $3,000 debt, one of the highest per capita debts in the world.

The past year did not fulfill the expectations of most Nicaraguans, just as it did not fulfill most of mine or the government's. However, as opposed to the years when you were president, 1992 was outstanding for the following accomplishments, which you should evaluate in their proper perspective;

1. We achieved modest but positive economic growth after eight years of continuous decline under your administration.

2. We were able to maintain low inflation of less than 4 percent annually, which constitutes a record in Latin America.

3. We demobilized thousands of recompas and recontras, as well as the destruction of approximately 70,000 weapons, grenades, land mines, and rockets that you brought into this country for people to use against each other.

4. On 3 December we were recognized by the international community when the community of donor countries pointed out that our country is moving in a positive direction and deserves continuous support.

5. We were able to advance toward the establishment of a legal state by respecting the verdicts issued by the Supreme Court of Justice with respect to the Atlantic coast governor as well as the National Assembly.

6. We achieved results in reducing the size of the military apparatus as well as in specializing the Armed Forces and the National Police. With each passing day, both agencies are more at the service of the Nicaraguan people without reservation as relates to political affiliation, which is as it should be. Finally, all Nicaraguans enjoy the benefits provided by the individual liberties that you suppressed and trampled out of fear of the truth and the people.

To normalize a country, rid it of its poverty and its economic gloom, establish a democracy, and at the same time consolidate peace is not something that can be done from one day to the next. It takes decades. It is very easy to destroy.

The year 1993 offers us the opportunity to double our efforts to work harder and increase productivity, which is what will provide the country with solid growth that will favor the great majority of unemployed that are paying for the errors of the past. It is not by indulging in disputes or politics that we are going to promote the creation of employment all our Nicaraguan people need.

Today, once again I invite you, jut as I did on 26 February 1990 at my home, to join the efforts to reconstruct Nicaragua in reconciliation and peace. You, as leader of an important political party, can and must do a lot for Nicaragua.

I regret to see you agreeing with Senator Helms and with politicians you yourself have described as Somoza sympathizers. I hope, however, that in evaluating what we have been able to accomplish amid so many difficulties, you will finally be able to understand the observations made to your year end message.

Respectfully,
Violeta B. de Chamorro
President of Nicaragua.

Ortega Reacts To Chamorro Criticism

PA0801021393 Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 6 Jan 93 p 8

["Statement" by Daniel Ortega Saavedra, secretary of the Sandinist National Liberation Front, FSLN, issued in Managua on 5 January]

[Text] In light of the government reaction to the content of the Sandinist National Liberation Front [FSLN] message issued on 31 December 1992, we reaffirm what we said and urge the government not to be deaf and blind to the tragedy of Nicaraguans.

The government does no good by trying to ignore the hard and sad reality affecting most Nicaraguans. We all know that unemployment, hunger, and dishonesty are the consequences of the economic policy known as neoliberalism, which has been implemented cruelly over the past two years and nine months. The present government has enforced this policy, depriving thousands of workers of their jobs and denying credit to most small and mid sized agricultural-livestock producers and industrialists, who cannot afford high interest rates.

Information compiled by international organizations on the high rate of unemployment and underemployment, which reaches 60 percent, and on the people's declining health care and education should make the members of the government's economic and financial cabinet aware of the crisis affecting the entire nation.

One only has to walk down the streets and roads to realize that the economic measures are causing the people to suffer, debasing them as human beings, and pushing them to dishonesty and crime. It is not a coincidence that Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, in the face of such a pathetic spectacle, has also pleaded on behalf of the large, increasingly impoverished majority.

Our position has been and will be in favor of the large majority, which has the right to a decent life. The country's stability depends on changes to the current economic policy that will guarantee the reactivation of the economy, investment, and consequently, the creation of jobs.

The land ownership problem must be resolved and owners of land that was expropriated must be duly compensated, in keeping with Laws 85, 86, and 88, in order to promote Nicaragua's socioeconomic development.

We favor stability and will promote and support initiatives proposed by workers, producers, businessmen, technicians, and professionals, who generate our country's wealth, as long as they are in keeping with the concerted effort and new socioeconomic agreement.

It is important that all Nicaraguans commit ourselves in 1993 to defend a new economic policy that will bring not only stability and social peace but also economic development based on justice and freedom.

[Signed] Daniel Ortega Saavedra

Government Minister Calls Armed Groups 'Criminals'

PA0801040393 Managua Radio Nicaragua Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] Government Minister Mendieta Artola has labeled the armed groups operating in different parts of the country a band of criminals. He said that combined National Police and Army forces have inflicted eight casualties on these armed groups. Two Army soldiers have been killed. Mendieta Artola made the statement on 6 January. He touched on other national problems in a conversation with Station Director Adolfo Pastrana Arancibia.

[Begin recording] [Mendieta] We are concerned with what you may consider a resurgence of armed groups. They are remnants of groups that were demobilized as part of a big task carried out by the government in 1992. Over 70,000 weapons and explosives were seized in 1992. There is a group, however, that is engaged in strictly criminal activities, dedicating itself to attacking several towns, killing children and pregnant women, and attacking vehicles. Since it does not fall into the category of a political group, it must be opposed as a criminal group, which it is. The Government Ministry, with the Army, is taking important action in Regions 1, 5, and 6 to put an end to these groups, which are diminishing. These groups are repudiated by all sectors of the population, who are their victims.

[Pastrana] Mr. Minister, what plans does your ministry have regarding police professionalization in 1993?

[Mendieta] We have important projects for 1993. We will begin by dividing the departments. Hereafter the regional chiefs that have existed until now will join the 17 departmental chiefs. We broke the Atlantic side into two regions. We are establishing the differences among the country's most important departments, including Managua, Leon, Granada, etc. In January we will try to form the board of directors of a committee to study the organic police law. The committee will include the minister, police chief, and police personnel chief. We are putting the final touches on transfers. Once the incumbents have taken over their specific departments, we will distribute the human and material resources to the different departments. This cannot be done except as a joint effort with the National Police Academy to improve professional levels. The president is intent on increasing the educational and training level of the Government Ministry corps, not only the National Police, but the penitentiary system, the immigration department, and firefighters. We are working hard on this. We plan to increase the number of police personnel to be in a better position to fight crime.

[Pastrana] Mr. Minister, I have kept abreast of the technical coup in the National Assembly over the past 24 hours. There was a complaint that the Government Ministry has militarized the assembly building. We have confirmed that there is free access to the parliament and that there are no restrictions. There are complaints regarding the security of documents in the assembly. What can you tell us?

[Mendieta] Yes, Adolfo, some deputies, particularly Mr. Luis Sanchez and Alfredo Cesar, have demonstrated about some irregularities they noticed in the National Assembly. There is a presidential agreement that orders us to put ourselves at the service of the provisional board of officers that will direct the future legislature. We have done so. We believe we were just in time, because the assembly statutes clearly state that the solemn session for the election of authorities must be held 9 January. It notes that seven days prior to this the provisional board of officers must be called to handle everything pertaining to this session. That date began on 2 January, when we placed ourselves at the disposal of the provisional board of officers. We have not increased security personnel in the assembly. The same number remains that functions during the year in the National Assembly and in the government house. It is totally untrue that the National Assembly has been militarized. [end recording]

Army-Rebel Skirmishes Reported

PA0801041893 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 7 Jan 93 pp 1, 8

[Report by Vladimir Lopez]

[Text] Eight dead, 16 wounded, five captured, and two kidnapped is the official toll of the latest skirmishes between government troops and armed individuals who are active in the country's northern zone. First Lieutenant Milton Dinarte, information and press chief of the Sandinist People's Army [EPS], confirmed the above and warned the "EPS set 31 January as the deadline for those groups to settle down in the enclave north of Quilali, or else they will be removed by military force."

The officer explained the casualties sustained correspond to military activities from 28 December, the date on which the "Everything for Stability" [Todo por la Estabilidad] operation started, through 5 January. Dinarte admitted the bands add up to over 400 men, who are heavily armed with AK-47 and M-16 rifles taken from caches buried by the former Nicaraguan Resistance when it demobilized. In breaking down the casualties, he noted five soldiers were wounded, one Government Ministry [Mingo] official was killed, and three were wounded. Five gang members were killed, seven were wounded, and five were captured. Two civilians were killed, one was wounded.

The source revealed the gang members are engaging in criminal activities to seek negotiations that will yield them good benefits. "That explains why they conduct desperate actions, which the peasants reject."

"They know they are alone; nobody supports them. Farmers and peasants demand a tough stance against these delinquents, who are not letting them work," Dinarte stated. He noted the bands took advantage of the "impasse" of the end of year holidays to attack two cooperatives, take over two towns (Santo Domingo and La Dalia), and attack four vehicles. The officer indicated most of the delinquents' criminal activities have occurred in La Dalia, Waslala, Quilali, Susacayan, El Jicaro, Rancho Grande, Mulukuku, Camoapa, and La Pinuela. Dinarte confirmed the deaths of leaders "Oso Blanco" and "Chilamete," and added that to date the following materiel has been seized: 10 war rifles, 1,000 rounds for AK-47 rifles, one radio, and 20 sets of military equipment (uniforms, knapsacks, etc.).

1st Lt. Dinarte said a large number of the members of those bands "are part-time fighters," peasants who live in those areas; they work during the day and come out at night." He said most of them were contras, and that he suspected that they will continue digging up large quantities of weapons.

Dinarte added the EPS has found out that the leaders go by the nicknames "Chacal," "Nortiel," "Relampago," "Invisible," "Palo de Gallina," "Cara de Malo," "Rojito," "Caturra," and "Punalito."

He said the military operation "Everything for Stability," which entails the participation of military forces from strife torn regions and special troops of the EPS General Staff, is limited and its objective is to annihilate these gangs. "The groups in the Quilali enclave will have the opportunity to negotiate with Deputy Government Minister Joaquin Lovo. Starting in February, however, the EPS will go after those who continue spreading terror, until they are annihilated," he stated.

A communique issued by the Sandinst National Liberation Front [FSLN] Matagalpa Department Directorate condemned the acts of looting and vandalism conducted by those groups in Esteli, La Dalia, and Waslala, and accused these groups of being "the same ones who have killed 100 Sandinists."

The FSLN said those self-styled "380" groups respond to the dictates of the mayors' movement called "Let's Save Democracy," formed by National Assembly President Alfredo Cesar, Vice President Virgilio Godoy, and Managua Mayor Arnoldo Aleman, "who in their politicking and ambitious plan are trying to bring a bloodbath to the country by immersing it in a civil war."

The communique supported the civic and constitutional measures adopted by the Judicial Branch against Engineer Alfredo Cesar and called on FSLN militants and sympathizers to close ranks in view of continuing aggressive activities by the right.

Our correspondent in Matagalpa reported new skirmishes between the armed individuals and the Armed Forces in this department's mountainous regions. The report filed by Moises Castillo reads as follows:

Matagalpa— Recent fighting between irregulars and government troops has left two dead and six wounded. The military forces continue their offensive against those armed groups that have left their safety zones to engage in acts of pillaging, a report by a local military source stated.

[Text] The rebels were killed in Mulukuku and mountainous regions of La Dalia, where they are hunted mercilessly by combined Army and National Police forces, a Mingo spokesman said.

Kidnap victims Manuel Altamirano Flores, Santiago Altamirano Flores, and Alfredo Gutierrez were rescued in the town of El Galope, Rancho Grande, a source at the EPS Region 6 Command said. The same source reported heavy fighting in Tierra Caliente against groups headed by "Cascabel" [Jose Santos Sanchez] and "Gavilan," who have been surrounded since the early morning hours of 6 December. As of press time, there was no information on any casualties in the skirmishes. The EPS reported the capture of recompa leader "Josesito Obando" during a skirmish in the Rio Blanco mountains, where the Armed Forces are conducting an intense military operation to keep rebels from fleeing into the mountains. Also set free was a Health Ministry employee named Pedro, who was kidnapped on 3 January when the recontras stormed La Dalia, a military spokesman added. Damage to the Central Waslala-La Dalia peasant store is estimated at 800,000 cordobas, since all the merchandise and a huge warehouse were set on fire.

As we went to press, Gilberto Rodriguez Rugama filed this report on fighting in Esteli.

Esteli— Fighting continues in this northern area between recontra groups and combined Army and Mingo forces. On 6 January skirmishes were reported in La Guayaba and San Lorenzo, 20 km from La Trinidad, that left one rebel dead and six wounded. Military sources indicated that the fighting took place from 0700 to 1000 when the rebels sought to enter La Trinidad and block mass transit to spread propaganda. The dead man, whose body was thrown in the bushes, has not been identified. The rebels took the wounded to an unknown location. The combined Army and Mingo forces continue to hunt the delinquents, who are allegedly led by "Cascabel." This man defected last December from Quilali's police command post, where he had served as area chief.

Another group of rearmed men, headed by "Charrito," "Nortiel," "Gavilan," "Comino," "Siete Mares," and other delinquents are staying in the areas around Esteli, La Concordia, Palacaguina, San Rafael del Norte, Yali, and San Nicolas de Oriente. Their goal is to conduct terrorist actions and take over those towns to install themselves as "guarantors of public order," replacing the Army and the National Police.

Those individuals call themselves members of the Patriotic Opposition Unity [Unidad Patriotica Opositora] and the National Salvation Democratic Force [Fuerza Democratica de Salvacion Nacional], terrorist forces that emerged during last year's visit to the north by Vice President Virgilio Godoy. These are small in number and claim in their communiques to be the armed wing of the extreme right. They also say they only obey orders from Virgilio Godoy, Alfredo Cesar, and Arnoldo Aleman.

• Health Workers' Wage Demands Examined

93CA0037A Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 27 Nov 92 p 7

[Text] People say they support the health workers' salary demands, but they are inconvenienced by restrictions caused by the strike. Salary and labor organization specialists consider the hospital employees' struggle just.

An analysis of the Ministry of Health's 12 salary levels reveals that the highest scale covers "A" level specialists with over 10 years of experience. They earn a salary of 1,216 cordobas, including payment for night work, years of service, and the AFA [Rice, Beans, and Sugar] "cordobized" package.

A comparative salary study indicates that a supervisor at La Fe supermarkets with only a fourth grade primary education earns a monthly salary of 1,350 cordobas, not including a 250-cordoba bond he gets from the supermarket at the end of every month.

An influential Labor Ministry official said the low salaries of Public Health System employees are a remnant of the salary distortion of the SNOTS [National Labor and Wage Regulation System] that still persists in the government. "We need to put an end to this distortion so we can promote labor discipline and efficiency, and protection our resources," he commented.

Salary Does not Cover Basic Essentials

Dr. Gustavo Porras, secretary general of FETSALUD [Federation of Health Workers], used documents to show that the minimum wage paid to support personnel is 234 cordobas, plus 46 cordobas for occupational hazards, coming to a total of 280 cordobas a month.

He noted that the overall cost of a total of 54 basic essentials comes to 890 cordobas. This means that cleaning, CFP [expansion not given], kitchen and laundry workers in hospitals and health centers can barely afford to buy 30 percent of their basic requirements.

The top salary in the Public Health System is 1,216 cordobas a month, paid to "A" rated specialists with over 10 years of experience. "What can a specialist do with 1,216 cordobas a month when he has to feed his family, buy books and materials to keep up to date, pay high water and electricity bills, and school fees for his children?" asked Dr. Porras.

He said doctors are also human beings who are affected by the economic crisis, and they need a decent salary to cover their household needs and to rid themselves of financial worries so they can devote their full attention to their humanitarian work of saving lives.

Using the IGV for Health

The leader of the health care workers reported that at a meeting on Wednesday with the economic cabinet, the minister of finance, Emilio Pereira, announced that the government was thinking of eliminating the IGV [General Sales Tax] tax in January 1993, even though they realized that businesses would not lower prices.

"We suggested that one way to resolve the health conflict without affecting the economic adjustment plan would be to earmark the IGV taxes collected for the Ministry of Health. This would use the IGV for social benefits, giving the people better services," he commented.

He said, though, that the government neither accepted nor rejected this proposal. "We hope that at the next meeting with the minister of finance we will reach an agreement on diverting the IGV to the MINSA [Ministry of Health]," he indicated.

Ministry of Health Salary Scale [in Cordobas]

Position	Base Salary	Night Differential	Hazardous Duty	Total
Laborers, CFP, cooks, laundry workers	234	0	46	280
Aides, morgue attendants	260	56	56	372
Nurse	340	68	68	476
Intern	409	80	80	570
Medical technician	439	87	87	614
Medical graduates	489	0	97	586
General practitioner, resident	559	111	111	782
Specialist	688	137	137	963
Specialist "B"	784	156	156	1097
Specialist "A"	819	163	163	1140
Subspecialist	869	173	173	1216

* Performance of Private Banks Reported

93CA0037B Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 10 Nov 92 p 4

[Text] A detailed report on the state of the nation's financial system as of 30 June 1992 was presented for the first time by the Office of the Banking Superintendent so that all economic, social, and political sectors may receive firsthand information on the evolution, variations, and projections of the financial market.

In the opinion of Angel Navarro Deshon, the superintendent of banks and other financial institutions, such information is needed.

In his introduction to the report, he says that in the past a comparative publication of data on private and state banks could have been "misinterpreted."

He noted that the government's improvement and capitalization plan for the state bank "has been completed with a strict analysis of assets and liabilities and the capitalization needed" to comply with the standards private banks are required to meet.

Every three months the Office of the Banking Superintendent will continue to release data on the financial status of all the banks, to support what Deshon called "the concept of banking supervision," which, he said, "may never have existed in Nicaragua, at least in the sense I expressed earlier of risk prevention and coverage."

One factor motivating the action of the superintendent's office, he said, is that the liberalization of financial markets that Nicaragua has undertaken in the past two years, and the consequent universalization of banking services, is now an ongoing trend in all countries.

This, he emphasized, leads to fluid and global operations by financial markets with the free selection of options by savers, and a range of alternatives available to borrowers, or seekers of liquidity.

Proper supervision of licenses and concessions granted under the Banking Law "becomes an essential element of the system in exercising the type of control the public interest demands," stated Deshon.

Rather than just overseeing the correctness, legality, and application of procedures and regulations, emphasized the official, banking supervision "monitors solvency, liquidity, and reasonable profits of financial institutions. These are the basic elements that protect banking institutions' depositors and creditors."

Nicaragua's Private Banks; Statements as of 30 June 1992

	Mercantile	Banpro	Bancentro	BAC	Bco de Pres. [Lending Bank]
Liabilities and Capital	122,442.5	143,115.6	100,269.4	135,430.8	ND [Not Reported]
Deposits	61,499.1	117,786.0	87,026.1	99,039.5	ND
National Currency	33,702.1	83,773.4	29,780.3	56,070.9	ND
Checking Accounts	16,560.9	35,878.7	16,598.0	34,655.7	ND
Other Demand Deposits	1,216.6	1,694.2	1,103.8	3,417.4	ND
Savings	618.1	2,509.3	3,611.6	2,793.0	ND
Term Deposits	15,306.5	43,691.2	8,466.9	15,204.8	ND
Foreign Currency	27,797.0	34,012.6	57,245.8	42,968.6	ND
Checking Accounts	14,079.3	16,162.0	38,910.9	20,288.4	ND
Other Demand Deposits	78.8	0.0	14.4	585.8	ND

Nicaragua's Private Banks; Statements as of 30 June 1992 (Continued)

	Mercantile	Bangro	Bancentro	BAC	Bco de Pres. [Lending Bank]
Savings	7,692.3	13,690.5	7,962.6	8,734.0	ND
Term	5,946.6	4,160.1	10,357.9	13,360.4	ND
Other Liabilities Payable	9,034.4	11,161.4	2,497.9	18,817.4	ND
National Currency	5,261.3	5,650.3	183.2	1,316.4	ND
Foreign Currency	3,773.1	5,511.1	2,314.7	17,501.0	ND
Loan Obligations	37,660.0	2,166.7	0.0	0.0	ND
Central Bank Loans	7,759.6	2,166.7	0.0	0.0	ND
Foreign Loans	29,900.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	ND
Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	ND
Branches, Offices and Parent Company Liabilities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	ND
Other Liabilities	770.6	857.3	317.1	1,202.8	ND
Subordinated Debts	5,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	ND
Capital	8,478.4	11,144.2	10,428.3	16,361.1	ND
Paid Capital and Reserves	10,000.0	12,173.2	10,000.0	15,000.0	ND
Cumulative Reserves	(646.3)	(487.0)	254.0	(178.5)	ND
Fiscal Year Reserves	(875.3)	(542.0)	174.3	1,539.6	(357.4)

Source: Office of the Superintendent of Banks and Other Financial Institutions (in thousands of cordobas, except percentages).

* 'Dual' Nature of FSLN Analyzed

93CA0037C Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 18 Nov 92 p 14

[Commentary by Luis Sanchez Sancho]

[Text] In the well-known Peter Pan story, Peter loses his shadow, thereby suffering a horrible and irreparable tragedy.

Losing one's shadow is tantamount to losing one's identity. A person without a shadow is nobody. This produces unbearable anguish that consumes Peter Pan's existence.

Fortunately, his dear friend Wendy finds his lost shadow, reattaches it to Peter's body, and everything is returned to normal.

Something similar is happening to the FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front]. It, too, has lost its identity, its shadow. It is torn by deep divisions and frequent changes in direction, and ideological distress predominates. In essence, the FSLN is suffering from the Peter Pan Syndrome.

It is evident that one sector of the Sandinist Front still shares governmental responsibility almost three years after it lost the elections and formally conceded.

But there are other sectors of the FSLN that are not a part of the privileged group of powerful military and rich businessmen who share or make use of this power. These Sandinist sectors have obtained little or no reward for the decade they fought or supported the government, and they have no reason to back the new government.

That is why the FSLN is making so many political errors. On one side the Sandinist Front is working hand in glove with the new government and acts in concert with the group that the executive controls.

At the same time, another part of the FSLN is promoting social agitation, destabilizing the nation, preventing the economy from beginning to recover, and keeping government officials on the verge of a nervous breakdown and impotent to deal with labor stoppages, business takeovers, and onslaughts of various types.

Some people believe all this is due solely to the FSLN's dual nature. However, the FSLN may be much more complicated than it appears, and than its clever handling of propaganda reveals.

There are still more than enough reasons indicating that the FSLN has been profoundly and irreparably damaged. It was not possible for the Sandinist party to survive intact the two terrible cataclysms it had to face, one after another: the defeat of the communist system which was its ideological lodestar and material support, and the political and moral defeat it suffered in the 1990 elections, and as a consequence of its "pinata" with state property.

So it is quite understandable that the FSLN has lost its ideological identity and coherence in its political action.

The latest events have made the FSLN's current situation even more evident. On one hand, the party's military sector is arrogantly pushing its claim to dominate the national political process and to control the executive, while minimizing and shoving aside the Sandinist Front's political apparatus.

Moreover, the Sandinist youth organization has rebelled against the party's rigid authority. According to a recent Sandinist poll, the majority of young people in the FSLN's areas of influence are not interested in the old party dogmas on revolution, the popular movement, and anti-imperialism. At the Sandinist Youth Congress they rebuffed the ideological line of the head of the party and proclaimed their independence from the FSLN.

Some of the FSLN's political spokespersons have protested that the Army is taking over the party's political role, but the leaders of the radicalized sector have unconditionally backed the ongoing dictatorial aims of the military leader.

The Sandinists' duality is also evident in their relations with the United States. Though some prominent FSLN leaders have maintained the traditional anti-U.S. posture, others are eager to go to Washington and win the confidence of U.S. officials.

It is understandable that the FSLN is as confused as the nation's general situation. It cannot remain untouched by the Nicaraguan crisis that was provoked by this very FSLN, with its unfortunate 10-year regime and its erratic policy after the 1990 elections.

That was certainly why the Socialist Internationale [IS] did not welcome it in its ranks. The IS invented a new marginal status of "permanent observer," to which it relegated only the FSLN and Colombia's M-19, while it gave membership to a huge number of former communist parties from East Europe and to former revolutionary groups in Africa.

The FSLN's loss of identity can only lead to an inevitable split, after which one of its factions could become a modern and responsible opposition political party. That would be much better for the sound forces in the Sandinist Front, and would significantly benefit the democratic process. The only thing lacking in the moderate sector is the courage to take this step. This may be only a matter of time.

* Commentary Warns Against 'Trust' in U.S.

93CA0037D Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 28 Nov 92 p 6

[Commentary by Francisco Bravo Lacayo]

[Text] In the terrible and unending struggle between urban and rural workers with the bourgeoisie and its government, the nation's economy is worsening and the danger is increasing that a conflagration a thousand times worse than what has just ended may erupt.

The people who are the worst off are workers who are being forced into a desperate struggle for survival, with nothing more than their class determination and unity as weapons to move ahead and endure.

The bourgeoisie, while it does not have the repressive power it had 15 years ago, still has economic power and a thousand ways to promote its demands; most of all, it is not ravaged by hunger.

While the struggle continues to rage here, a spectator watches and waits for just the right moment to step in and carry off the prize.

This spectator is the imperialists in the north. They put together the counterrevolution, using our divisions, and even though they did not win a military victory, they did help their internal allies to win the elections by supporting the destruction of our economy and holding out to us the inducement of major economic assistance for reconstruction.

Later Bush acted like a usurer, dribbling out aid and loans, handing out cash in accordance with his policy of hegemonic reconquest.

Unsatisfied with Mrs. Chamorro's reconciliation policy, he took back the aid and using his pit bull, Jesse Helms, began an attack worthy of Somozism against the government to force it to give in, or overthrow it if necessary.

It is clear that the old foxes of our dirty politics are playing the game of intervention, but what, we wonder, is going on with the younger generation of politicians. Are they going to follow the old and worn out routes of betrayal?

That is apparently a foolish question, and the answer is obvious. There are no signs, or if there are, they are very slight, that the young leaders of the bourgeois parties might break with old schemas and dare to blaze new routes to defend and assert a nationhood that, to date, only the revolutionary forces have championed.

Now these people are placing their hopes in the new Clinton administration, as Clinton waits calmly to move into the White House, supposedly without sharing any responsibility for the evils his predecessors unleashed on our country. But our dreamers are forgetting that U.S. foreign policy has always been framed by bipartisan consensus.

It is clear that these young people, prematurely old before their time, have not learned the lesson history has taught us. This prolongs our people's sufferings and endangers the nation's future.

* Editorial Urges 'Isolation' of Rightists

93CA0037E Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 19 Nov 92 p 11

[Editorial: "The Right Is Beating the War Drums"]

[Text] The growing virulence of rightist propaganda and the intensified provocations aimed at Sandinist leaders have in recent days caused concern in diplomatic circles, who fear the start of a confrontation designed to prevent the nation's advance toward a basic understanding.

Last weekend during a political rally of supporters of Vice President Virgilio Godoy and the head of the legislature, Alfredo Cesar, there were calls for a "firing squad" for General Humberto Ortega and the Sandinists.

A few days earlier the director of COSEP [Higher Council of Private Enterprise], Ramiro Gurdian, asked for prison terms for FNT [National Workers Front] members, while Enrique Bolanos called "suspicious" the government officials who favor dialogue and political understanding. Yesterday it was the turn of the Somozist mayor Arnoldo Aleman, who coolly called Comandante Tomas Borge an "assassin."

In today's inflammatory atmosphere, if the most representative heads of the anti-Sandinist extremists continue to threaten, what response may we expect from those who feel themselves threatened?

Jail, persecution, and firing squads: that was how the Somozist dictatorship governed, and we all know what that led to. If the Right wants a replay, we are sure there will be no lack of Sandinists ready to take up the fight again.

President Chamorro's government emerged from a democratic process that pledged from the start to promote reconciliation and social peace among the Nicaraguan people. This promise is being impeded by those who were her running mates in the election, people who still have not accepted the fact that the election outcome is not equivalent to a military victory on the part of the forces of counterrevolution.

It seems paradoxical that while the United States is now repudiating Reaganism, in Nicaragua people who talk constantly about democracy and the rule of law want to maintain their power by resorting to a policy that produced more than a decade of aggression and economic blockade without managing to defeat Sandinism. Revanchism and confrontation as methods to achieve political objectives invariably result in an escalation of violence. The majority of the people voted on 25 February to put an end to that outcome.

Two years later, even the United States is not interested in keeping the Nicaraguan economy down; there is no support for such a political contest in U.S. foreign policy. The White House is having too much trouble with its own domestic problems to gratuitously take more onto its shoulders.

The Right, though, continues trying to heat up the climate of political instability, with the sole result of driving the national and foreign investment that the country needs even further away.

Sandinism, whether the extremists like it or not, is not only a political reality; it is also a fundamental factor for creating a national understanding. If the far Right continues to maintain that those who make up the nation's largest political force should be jailed and sent to face firing squads, it is inevitable that the Sandinists will rise to defend themselves and take back their rights.

The government and all national leaders who are truly committed to moving the nation forward have a responsibility to avert such a confrontation. The isolation of the far Right is a "sine qua non" condition if we are to achieve national stability. The threats must be halted before they result in chaos and disaster.

Panama

President Endara Opposes Media Shut Down

PA0701195093 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 7 Jan 93 p 1

[From the "Latest News"]

[Text] On 6 January, President Guillermo Endara denied the possible shut down of EL SIGLO. He also emphasized he would do everything to prevent such a measure.

Endara stated: "Even though the newspaper has never portrayed me favorably and has been very critical of me, I will defend it."

He indicated that as soon as he found about the possible shut down, he contacted Government Minister Juan Chevalier and Acting Attorney General Jorge Ramon Valdes. Both officials assured him they had no knowledge of the issue.

The head of the executive branch indicated a bill that allows the shut down of media does not exist because the newspaper owners and reporters have not agreed on how to enact the bill.

Meanwhile, Chevalier reiterated President Endara's statements by pointing out that the government and Justice Ministry had not issued orders to shut down any media.

Columnist Comments on DEA Operations

PA0701215193 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 7 Jan 93 p 6A

["Hidden Truths" column by Tomas A. Cabal: "DEA Increases Its Operations in Panama]

[Text] As my colleague Juan Pritsiola reported a few days ago, the U.S. DEA has been increasing its presence in Panama. The arrival of a new station chief, plus the existence of new covert operations confirm the U.S. authorities' decision to repress drug trafficking related crimes in Panama.

It is evident, in spite of initial denials by U.S. Ambassador Hinton and the democratic government, that drug trafficking and money laundering have already reached levels higher than those that existed during the Noriega dictatorship. Ambassador Hinton has changed his initial position, perhaps because he is leaving Panama and ending his diplomatic career, as some diplomatic observers have noted. His latest speech is still generating shockwaves, regardless of what Guillermo Endara may say in public.

The increase in drug trafficking and money laundering and the corruption of the democratic government have made the headlines in U.S. newspapers. Sooner rather than later this situation will be mirrored in the policy drafts of U.S. Government strategists and security agencies.

If the Panamanian Government, through the National Police, the Judicial Technical Police [PTJ], and the Customs Directorate, does not step up its work, DEA will. Customs has made spectacular achievements but there are still indications that subordinate officials at border posts are permitting drug trafficking. It is up to Rodrigo Arosemena to continue purging corrupt officials. This purging requires, logically, improved salaries and equipment, training, and expert advice. The same applies to the PTJ and the National Police. Starvation salaries, lack of resources and equipment, and a lack of incentives and training policies keep our security organizations paralyzed.

The leaders of these agencies leave a lot to be desired. Government Minister Juan Chevalier and the director of the National Security Commission have no specialized training in supervising these activities. The government minister can remedy this problem by creating a special position, filled by an expert in this matter. Unfortunately, Menalco Solis, director of the National Security Commission, is not at liberty to do so because of his Norieguist past and his ignorance in security matters.

Efforts should be coordinated with U.S. agencies such as DEA, but mutual trust is required to produce this. The corruption that exists in the Attorney General's Office and in our security organizations cannot inspire any trust among the North Americans. The equipping of these units with funds donated by the United States must continue because that country is the largest consumer of the drugs that move through Panama.

As long as disorganization, inefficiency, corruption, influence peddling, and nepotism remain in the administration, it will be impossible to stop the drug wave threatening the country.

If we as a country remain unable to check the drug scourge, DEA will do it for us "like it or not." As Manuel Antonio Noriega, government officials, and civilians have found out, DEA's presence has two objectives.

You can be certain, as Pritsiola has commented, that the DEA has increased its covert activities in Panama. The agents will have codes and targets, in addition to the ones already mentioned. DEA has already increased its activities in Panama. Its operations, as some attorneys and businessmen have discovered, sometimes take months, but eventually they lead to a U.S. court and a federal prison.

U.S. Soldiers Said To Direct Burning of Homes

PA0601161793 Panama City CRITICA LIBRE in Spanish 6 Jan 93 p 12

[By Yodalis Bethancourt]

[Text] Councilman Pastor Sanchez of Santa Clara corregimiento has said: "The U.S. is lying when it tells the world it is helping Somalis fight hunger." Sanchez complained to the full council on 5 January that Panamanian officials, under the direction of U.S. soldiers, are burning crops and homes in Huile, an area adjacent to military areas along the Panama Canal in Arraijan District.

Sanchez said peasants in Huile were surprised to see their (Panamanian) compatriots destroying beans, root vegetables, and other crops that had been planted for food in view of the national government's inability to meet their subsistence needs.

The Arraijan councilman, who is also a peasant leader, said U.S. soldiers visited the area over the Christmas holidays to give toys and sweets to the children, but the "hypocritical" action was tarnished by the burning of crops and huts owned by poor peasants, who are expecting a pronouncement by the national government against the U.S. Government. Sanchez asked the other councilmen to support him in issuing a protest against this action.

Argentina

Hurd, Di Tella Meeting Has 'Positive Results'

PY0701160293 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1440 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] Buenos Aires, 7 Jan (TELAM)—The first meeting between Argentine Foreign Minister Guido di Tella and Great Britain's Douglas Hurd [secretary of state for foreign and commonwealth affairs] produced "positive results," according to Di Tella, who said that "the most important topics of bilateral relations were given an overall review."

At the end of the meeting, which lasted for two and a half hours in the Golden Room of San Martin Palace, the Argentine foreign minister said that he was "very optimistic about this meeting," in which "possibilities for cooperation between the two countries" were evaluated.

When consulted, together with his British colleague who declined to comment, Di Tella stated that during this first meeting "the topic of sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands surfaced. Each country ratified its respective position" regarding rights over the archipelago.

The Argentine foreign minister said that the topic of President Carlos Menem's trip to Great Britain "was not discussed." Di Tella explained that other more urgent matters for the two countries had to be discussed.

Di Tella said that the main topics of the meeting, which will continue this afternoon after a luncheon at the Foreign Ministry, revolve around "increasing trade relations and British investments" in Argentina.

Falklands Islands' Sovereignty Viewed

PY0701171893 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1313 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] Buenos Aires, 7 Jan (TELAM)—Discussing sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, Carlos Manuel Muniz, the president of the Argentine Council for International Relations (CARI), has stressed: "We Argentines must continue to work for what we believe is an undeniable right that we must defend under any circumstances."

Muniz said this after meeting with Douglas Hurd, the British Foreign Office [preceding two words in English] secretary of state, and Argentine ambassadors and legislators.

The CARI president said that the participants of the meeting reviewed the reconstruction of Argentine-British relations, especially the most recent meeting in the British city of Cambridge, at which four members of the Malvinas Islands Council participated.

Muniz said that sovereignty is "a national issue that we can never abandon." He emphasized the necessity to defend the rights over the islands "under any circumstances."

British ambassador to Argentina Humphrey Maud; Ambassadors Lucio Garcia del Solar, Mario Campora, and Fernando Petrella; and Senators Eduardo Menem and Juan Ramon Aguirre Lanari, among others, participated in the meeting.

* British Weapons Delivery to Falklands Denounced

93SM0077B Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 6 Nov 92 p 6

[Text] The Argentine Congress 48 hours ago passed into law a proposal to place a second "protective umbrella" between Argentina and England, in this case, to protect investments and trade between the two countries.

Within the framework of "naked realism" inspiring the United Kingdom's tactics abroad, it is possible to assume that the favorable vote of the Argentine Congress comes within the strategy of "small steps" created by the English to "detach" from commerce any question regarding the Malvinas.

One of the basic principles of British diplomacy consists of backing up "commerce" with a considerable military deployment, including in this matter of the two umbrellas, the theory of "divide and rule."

For the past four months, the Administrative Council of the Malvinas has been conducting negotiations in Brussels, at the headquarters of the European Economic Community, for the purpose of obtaining initial recognition as observer, surely with the hidden aim of soon claiming some sort of presumed "national independence" and "automatic" entry as an independent member of the British Commonwealth.

Furthermore, the Malvinas military garrison has been reinforced by at least 12 Tornado fighter aircraft, and the satellite information network, which permits the surveillance of the entire air, sea, and land area of most of the southern hemisphere, has been strengthened. The requirements for the search are transmitted from Easter Island.

Reinforcing trade with arms has almost always been a winning strategy for the United Kingdom. The matter has been divided into two parts. The Argentine Congress holds out the promise of British commerce in our country. Important English investors are now appearing to compete for three items of special interest to them: gas, petroleum, and fishing. By coincidence, these activities are centered in the southern part of our country.

The Malvinas will be a separate subject. The status as an independent country, toward which the Malvinas Administrative Council is moving, allows the English to negotiate these three matters separately.

The so-called "theory of two umbrellas" is working very well: one umbrella to protect "the three commercial items" with Argentina, and the other to be able to negotiate with the rest of the world about these same items.

For its part, Argentina is also trying to strengthen its military power. Recycled aircraft will soon be added to the Air Force, and the possibility of "completely refurbishing" the old aircraft carrier, 25 of May, is still being discussed.

Once again, the strategic competition that the two countries who fought the Malvinas war have undertaken to protect their postwar investments and commerce finds us in a weakened situation, with two umbrellas instead of one, and inferior weapons in the area of competition.

* Maiorano Advocates Constitutional Reform

93SM0077A Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 11 Nov 92 p 6

[Text] Minister of Justice Jorge Maiorano, yesterday, 10 November, resolutely joined those in the government who advocate reform of the national Constitution, describing it as an "absolute necessity" for the country.

Maiorano was the guest of honor at the monthly luncheon of the Argentine Chamber of Advertisers at a downtown Buenos Aires hotel, and took the opportunity to complain about the "lack of social solidarity" that prevails in Argentina.

He also urged his listeners to discover and encourage "living examples of ethics" in order to rise above the present situation, which he described as an "emergency."

"There will be no credible reform of the state if, at the same time, man is not reformed," he asserted, and he objected to the "lack of rational and mature political tolerance" among leaders.

The minister explained that one of the reasons reform of the Constitution is imperative lies in the importance of creating "mechanisms of citizen participation," such as the referendum, the right of veto and initiative, the plebiscite, and the figure of the "ombudsman," which already exists and functions in provincial jurisdictions.

In Maiorano's view, a country that is preparing to enter the 21st century cannot continue to govern itself with a Constitution from the mid-19th century, although he recognized that there are many Argentines "whose skin crawls" whenever they hear constitutional changes discussed.

After he had praised the program of transformation initiated by the present government, Maiorano said that the program should be accompanied by "a sociological and cultural base," and warned that the frequently mentioned judicial insecurity "will exist as long as that program has no solid base."

Speaking in a broader perspective, Maiorano said that any analysis of the present situation can be seen in a pessimistic light, "looking at it through a dark lens," as he metaphorically noted, or, on the other hand, emphasizing positive accomplishments. Wishing to be even clearer, he used the example of the glass that was "half full or half empty," according to the viewer, and he added that "until recently, it was completely empty, and now it is half full," although "it is far from being completely full."

Maiorano termed reprehensible the "superficial and facile chorus" of criticism of the government by "those who were not able, did not have the spirit, or did not allow the government" to carry out changes that are indispensable for the country.

At the same time, he urged today's Argentines to learn to become "the fulcrum of history." To that effect, he quoted Voltaire's remark that "the worth of a people is measured by the difficulties they have overcome."

One of the questions from those present referred to the decrees of necessity and urgency, and their validity at a time when Congress is functioning. The minister defended their use, "although not unthinkingly," because he believes that the executive branch can act "in a more timely way" on certain matters than Congress, and such measures are a way of "taking immediate action on an immediate need."

Bolivia

MacLean on Trade Policies, U.S. Relations

PY0801003393 La Paz Television Nacional Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] Bolivian Foreign Minister Ronald MacLean has emphasized the necessity of promoting relations between Bolivia and neighboring countries in order to achieve improved trade conditions. He described activities in 1992 as having been positive, but emphasized the discussion of new agreements and treaties between Bolivia and the United States.

[Begin MacLean recording] We believe all these free trade agreements we are reaching with neighboring countries, Mexico, and Andean Group countries are significantly increasing our trade prospects.

These are diplomatic efforts of very important economic impact, because they will represent increased employment, sales, and exports for the Bolivian people. In sum, they represent foreign exchange and wealth.

Our diplomacy is therefore strongly dedicated to finding new horizons for Bolivian markets and for Bolivian products, because it represents employment for the Bolivians living in Bolivia.

We also have an important relationship, which is being restructured and rechanneled, with the United States.

We have at least three agreements—I am saying three, but there may be more than three—that are being studied for signing. These agreements will restructur· our relationship with the United States, a relationship which, as I have always said, is good, meaningful, and

has been friendly for a long time. However, it has room for qualitative improvement, as our country has changed—even the world has changed—and because there are new political realities in both countries.

The new Clinton administration provides new alternatives and possibilities for our country. [end recording]

These possibilities include the new extradition treaty between Bolivia and the United States, which is still pending and which has attracted the attention of various Bolivian segments, involving opinions both for and against it.

Compliance With COB Strike Observed

PY0701130993

[Editorial Report] La Paz Radio Fides Network in Spanish at 1100 GMT on 6 January, as part of its regular newscast, carries a series of reports on the nationwide strike called by the Bolivian Labor Federation, COB, on 5 January to protest the governmental decision to increase fuel prices.

A one-and-a-half-minute report from Santa Cruz states that 95 percent of public transport drivers complied with the strike ordered by the Bolivian Drivers Confederation, although taxis and some bus companies worked normally. The reports adds that interdepartmental and inter-provincial bus companies did not work on 5 January. The local COB office reported that 70 percent of the workers complied with the strike in the region although Bolivian Government Oil Deposits workers, railway company workers, and most public service employees worked normally. The report states that several organizations believe the government must review its decision or increase salaries to compensate for the hike in most prices that will follow the increase in fuel prices.

The station then carries a one-minute report from Cochabamba stating that the strike was partially observed, that buses did not work, although taxis worked normally. The report quotes the local mayor as saying that 99 percent worked normally, while COB leader Ruben Cortez reported that 80 percent complied with the strike.

In a one-and-a-half-minute report from Oruro, the reporter says that the strike was only partially observed, that only after midday was the number of buses reduced, and that university students, public health employees, and other public employees peacefully complied with the 24-hour strike. The reporter adds that COB leader Felipe Vazquez said his organization was entirely satisfied with the result. The reporter concludes by saying that banks, industries, and stores functioned normally.

A two-minute report from Sucre states that 70 percent of the local workers and public transport drivers observed the strike, and that employees of some private and public organizations had to leave work early in view of the lack of transportation. He says that city streets were empty as if it were a Sunday. The report adds that COB leader Hugo Anfuero said the workers are dissatisfied with anti-nationalistic measures.

A one-and-a-half-minute report then details incidents that occurred during demonstrations in El Alto yesterday protesting the fuel price hike. Twelve policemen were injured, two of them seriously; several police cars were damaged; and some 67 people were arrested.

A four-minute report, also from El Alto, notes that the strike was partially observed although the transportation sector was almost paralyzed. The report gives more details of the incidents and the name of the people arrested.

Finally, a one-minute report from Trinidad states that the strike was partially observed in the region and that many protested the increase in fuel prices. The report adds that taxis functioned normally although employees of the public health department, the mayoralty, and the university fully complied with the strike.

Brazil

Presidential Meeting With Governors a 'Failure'

PY0701142293 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 6 Jan 93 p 4

[Report by Rita Tavares]

[Excerpt] Brasilia—Due to the absence of the main governors from the Northeastern states, the initial meeting on the political pact, which was scheduled to be the beginning of an understanding, has been a failure. In an effort to stem negative repercussions to the attempted broad meeting between President Itamar Franco and all the governors, Pedro Simon (PMDB-RS) [Brazilian Democratic Movement Party-Rio Grande do Sul State), the government bloc leader in the Senate, quickly explained that the meeting was scheduled a long time ago and that tourism in the Northeastern states had been scheduled for discussion. Simon emphasized: "It is good not to mix the two issues."

Expectations were quite different last weekend. Following his first meeting with Itamar after the latter's installation as president, Maranhao Governor Edison Lobao (PFL) [Liberal Front Party] left the Planalto Palace with a commitment to seek the support of other governors from the Northeastern states for the political pact. Lobao extended invitations, but the result did not match the promises made to the president. "Heavyweights" Antonio Carlos Magalhaes (Bahia State), Ciro Gomes (Ceara State), and Joaquim Francisco (Pernambuco State) did not go to Brasilia. Alagoas Governor Geraldo Bulhoes was also absent. Bulhoes preferred to welcome former President Fernando Collor, who arrived in Maceio during the afternoon.

Constrained to thwarting expectations, Governors Joao Alves (Sergipe State), Jose Agripino Maia (Rio Grande

do Norte State), Ronaldo Cunha Lima (Paraiba State), and Freitas Neto (Piaui State) as well as Ceara Vice Governor Lucio Alcantara and Minas Gerais Governor Helio Garcia, whose state has been partially included in the interests of Sudene [Northeast Development Superintendency], guaranteed that they did not discuss a pact with Itamar. They swore that they discussed technical-administrative issues. Headed by Lobao, who directed the pro-Itamar chorus, Cunha Lima, Alves, and Freitas said they favored an understanding. [passage omitted]

Maritime Limits Reduced to 12 Nautical Miles

PY0701135393 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 6 Jan 93 p 12

[Text] Brasilia—President Itamar Franco has promulgated Law No. 8617 which reduces Brazil's territorial waters from 200 to 12 nautical miles and establishes rights over the adjacent zone, the continental shelf, and the exclusive economic zone which extends from the 12 mile to the 200 mile limit.

According to Itamaraty advisers, the reduction in the territorial waters does not mean Brazil is opening up regarding its sovereignty and its exclusive economic zone. It is a question of adapting to an international tendency toward a 12 mile limit. Foreign vessels may fish in Brazilian waters if they obtain authorization. The exclusive economic zone means that fishing vessels will be subject to Brazilian law.

Chile

Chile Recognizes New Czech, Slovak Republics

PY0801004493 Santiago Radio Cooperativa Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] The Chilean Government has recognized the Czech and Slovak Republics, and has established diplomatic relations with the two new states.

This information was disclosed by the Chilean Foreign Ministry through an official communique.

Ties with the Czech and Slovak Republics were officially resumed on 1 January, according to the procedures previously established with the authorities of the no longer existing Czech and Slovak Republics [as heard].

The communique goes on to point out that the Chilean Government has thus reasserted its desire to promote the strong relationship sought by the Czech and Slovak Republics in the various fields of bilateral relations, with the purpose of attaining a closer relationship between the governments and people of Chile and of the two new republics, according to the foreign minister.

Pinochet Opposes Bill Amending Military Law

PY0801003593 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Report by Jose Manriquez Contreras from the Congress building in Valparaiso]

[Excerpts] General Augusto Pinochet, the Army commander in chief, appeared before the Defense Committee of the Chamber of Deputies yesterday to discuss the bill on constitutional reforms to the Armed Forces and Carabineros Organizational Law. The briefing lasted for more than three hours. As expected, Gen. Pinochet was against this reform, which would enable the president of the Republic to remove the Armed Forces commanders in chief. Gen. Pinochet contended that the Armed Forces are guided by the principles established by the Constitution rather than by the ruling political party.

Pro-government deputies are of the view that it is not fair to continue with the current system, which gives the Armed Forces a certain independence which exempts them from subordination to civilian authorities. [passage omitted]

The Defense Committee will continue studying this question in its subsequent working sessions. The Navy and Air Force commanders will also be summoned to appear before this committee. [passage omitted]

Supreme Court Approves New Chief Justice

PY0701142793 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Report by Teresa Barrias]

[Excerpt] By a 15-1 vote, the Supreme Court approved the appointment of Marcos Aburto Ochoa as new chief justice. Justice Aburto has been acting chief justice for some months, replacing Chief Justice Enrique Correa Labra. He was officially installed today as Supreme Court chief justice. [passage omitted]

Human Remains Found at Former Police Station

PY0701191693 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] So far seven male skeletons, ranging from 29 to 45 years old, have been found at the site where the 4th Carabineros Precinct of Lota [in the Eighth Region] was located until 1987. A branch of the State Bank is currently being built there, on the corner of Pedro Aguirre Cerda and Galvarino Streets.

Lota Criminal Judge Sergio Aravena Urra and Sergio Lagos Olave, a local forensic physician, went to the site twice while three more skeletons were being removed. Judge Aravena confirmed that he ordered the suspension of construction work when the first skeletons were found on 24 December. Two skeletons were found on 4 January where the guard room of the Carabineros station was reportedly located.

The seven skeletons are at the morgue of Lota's hospital and are guarded by Carabineros personnel. Aravena said he is confident this case will be fully cleared up.

Lagos said: I want to confirm that the remains could not have come from an Indian cemetery. I knew this 48 hours after the first two skeletons were found.

He said the date of the death might have already been determined, adding that the margin of error might be one or two years, but confirmed that he could not give any more information because the investigation is being kept secret.

Colombia

Acting Government Minister on New Decrees

PA0701175893 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Telephone interview with Acting Government Minister Jaime Buenahora by unidentified reporter in Santa Fe de Bogota—live]

[Text] [Reporter] The national government has just issued three new internal disturbance decrees. We will now talk with Acting Government Minister Jaime Buenahora. Good morning. Can you summarize the scope of the new decrees?

[Buenahora] I would be glad to do so. Good morning to all the radio listeners. On 6 January, as everyone already knows, three new internal disturbance decrees were issued. One of the decrees refers to the reiterated attacks on the pipelines transporting petroleum and its by-products and the theft of gasoline products. This has caused a serious deterioration of the national fuel system, leading to a decrease of supplies in some cities. It was determined that from now on the regional civil judges will handle the cases of theft of petroleum, its by-products, and associated crimes. This is an important issue, as last year the Colombian Petroleum Enterprise lost $12 million as a result of those thefts.

Another decree was issued regarding revoking weapons permits. This decree would allow military authorities to implement this measure when circumstances warrant. This measure also applies to controls on the use of bullet-proof vehicles, etc.

To conclude, the last decree refers to the use of communications equipment, such as beepers, mobile radio telephones, and portable telephones. These decrees should be implemented in a direct fashion as measures adopted by the state of internal disturbance.

[Reporter] Does this legislation cease once the state of internal disturbance expires?

[Buenahora] Obviously, the decrees issued are of a temporary nature.

[Reporter] That is right.

[Buenahora] Nevertheless, the Constitution provides for a 90 day extension....

[Reporter, interrupting] That is what we wanted to ask you. Is the government considering the extension of the state of internal disturbance? This first period of the state of internal disturbance expires the first week of February.

[Buenahora] Precisely, two months will have passed on 8 January, that is 60 days, since the state of internal disturbance was decreed. I believe this will be the time for an accurate assessment of all the effects, results, and consequences of the state of internal disturbance. Depending on this analysis, an extension will be implemented or the state of internal disturbance will be lifted. The truth is that the state of internal disturbance has produced significant results for the reestablishment of public order in the nation.

[Reporter] Nevertheless, the Senate must approve an extension of the state of internal disturbance.

[Buenahora] The second extension, as provided by the Constitution....[pauses] because there could be two extensions, this does require the Senate's approval.

[Reporter] That is right. So the Senate will have to be summoned during the first week of February if the government decides the state of internal disturbance should be extended.

[Buenahora] Wait a minute....[pauses] the Constitution clearly states that prior to any declaration or extension of a state of internal disturbance, the Senate would have to meet. That is, without the need of being summoned. One thing I want to make clear, as it is advantageous for the community to know, is that the Senate's approval is required for a second extension.

[Reporter] I understand. Now, one final matter. Presidential candidate Carlos Lemos Simmonds contends President Gaviria is favoring candidate Humberto De la Calle Lombana. How has the government taken these charges?

[Buenahora] I believe this is an argument used by a person who is aspiring to participate in an election or to a presidential candidacy. Undoubtedly, any person who is in the government, that is an ambassador, a minister, or a head of administrative department, among others, has the opportunity to resign and to enter the political arena to assume or to continue with his responsibilities regarding the state and the constituency. Humberto De la Calle has been considered by a group of very distinguished personalities and by a large number of party members as one of the possible candidates. I do not believe at any time there has been or that there will be impartiality by the government.

[Reporter] Nevertheless, several members of the Liberal Party National Directorate are going to issue a communique in which the government will be asked to remain neutral. In addition, they will request the government minister to resign now if he wants to engage in politics or if he wants to

participate in the elections. The same goes for Ernesto Samper [ambassador to Spain]. What do you have to say about this?

[Buenahora] I am certain that considering the Constitution's limitations on this issue, those who have presidential aspirations—when the time comes—will resign their posts to respond to a national [words indistinct] to be debated.

[Reporter] Mr. Buenahora, have you talked to President Gaviria about the Lemos issue?

[Buenahora] No I have not.

[Reporter] Do you think he might be annoyed by this accusation?

[Buenahora] The president has acted with total neutrality.

Ecuador

Bank Linked to Reyes Torres Money Laundering

PA0701172493 Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 1200 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] Ecuadoran police have confirmed Banco de Ruminahui's links to the laundering of dollars from drug trafficking. The police reported that the bank's executives, headed by former manager Jose Racines, kept double books for their dollar deposits. According to initial estimates, that practice involved the laundering of approximately $8 million. The police said many individuals were involved in the illegal activity, and they are now being investigated to determine their level of responsibility. Most of those implicated are under arrest. The money laundering was being carried out by the group headed by Jorge Hugo Reyes Torres.

Air Force Commander Completes Term of Duty

PA0601004993 Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 2200 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Brigadier General William Birkett, the Air Force general commander, has stated that the Ecuadoran Air Force, FAE, has a great flight safety record, because it has had no accidents in eight years. During my command, he noted, we have reorganized the institution. The discipline and moral conduct of its members have improved.

With regard to changes within the FAE, he said:

[Begin recording] [Birkett] I will complete two years as FAE commander on 6 January. As established in personnel regulations and the organic law, there is a limit of two years in that post. Consequently, I will present my request to be discharged on 6 January and will retire from Armed Forces active service.

[Unidentified reporter] [words indistinct] reducing the Armed Forces budget.

[Birkett] It is a question that must be answered by the defense minister. It goes beyond the limits of my responsibility.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]

[Birkett] I think that the new commander will be General Marcos Chavez, as far as I know.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]

[Birkett] I think that the Air Force has made remarkable progress considering that [words indistinct] bad situation. A group of colonels had to take charge of the Air Force and, in these past four years, there has been improvement, especially with regard to moral conduct and discipline. We have also become stronger in equipment and installations. In addition, 1992 has been a year in which the Air Force established a flight safety record: eight years without any deaths as a result of airplane accidents. [end recording]

Paraguay

Reports Confirm 'Indisputable U.S. Cooperation'

PY0701120593 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 7 Jan 93 p 2

[Excerpt] Within the secret archives which record the repression against "stateless and international communism," there exists abundant documentation on the indisputable U.S. cooperation received by the Technical Affairs Department [of the Interior Ministry], which was headed by the now fugitive Antonio Campos Alum. The documentation seized on 6 January by Judge [Jose Agustin] Fernandez contains reports, correspondence, and evidence of cooperation by U.S. diplomats addressed to Campos Alum "just in case they could be of use."

A report, written in English and dated 1978 on former Panamanian strongman Manuel Antonio Noriega, who is currently in a U.S. prison serving a sentence for drug trafficking, was found amongst the documentation and must also be mentioned. At that time the U.S. Government already had enough evidence to bring him to trial according to the report (which describes Noriega as a "cruel and ambitious chief of Panamanian intelligence"), because he was already working with drug traffickers like Carlos Duque [not further identified]. Reports on "suspicious terrorists" that were provided by official U.S. agencies were also discovered. [passage omitted]

More on U.S. Cooperation

PY0701131793 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 7 Jan 93 p 3

[Text] The cooperation that the United States provided the Technical Affairs Department [of the Interior Ministry] has been fully proven through the documentation discovered in the offices of the sinister repressive organization that was responsible for eliminating any type of organization with communist leanings in our country.

Correspondence from diplomats, manuals, and even reports referring to festivals held in Mexico by persons with communist leanings appear profusely among the documentation seized by Judge Jose Agustin Fernandez.

Within the archives are several notes addressed to [Antonio] Campos Alum, [head of the Technical Affairs Department of the Interior Ministry], by Robert W. Scherrer, Legal Affairs Attache of the U.S. Embassy in Argentina. The diplomat attaches to his notes, dated 13 May and 13 June 1975, reports on terrorism and even a complete dossier on those persons, with communist leanings, who organized the Fifth Chicano Theater Festival in Mexico City.

The reports mentioned on the facing page, on the Panamanian leader's involved in drug trafficking, were also found. Manuals on interrogation prepared by U.S. experts based in the Panama Canal Zone were also found.

It must be recalled that Anibal Miranda, a writer and political pundit, recently released documentation to the media which proved that the United States provided official aid to the Technical Affairs Department. Miranda even indicated that officials of the repressive organization, headed by Campos Alum, received training from U.S. advisers.

Argana Faction Charges Colorado Electoral Board

PY0701140993 Lambare Paraguay Radio Cardinal in Spanish 0900 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] Juan Bautista Ybanez, the vice-presidential precandidate for the Argana-Ybanez ticket, yesterday gave a news conference to raise serious charges, notably concerning actions that seek to reverse the outcome of the 27 December Colorado primaries. He said:

[Begin Ybanez recording, in progress] ....actions that will take place are extremely serious because they are related to the following members of the Independent Colorado Electoral Board: Ida Fleitas de Hermosa and Felipe Santiago Paredes. The latter is a legal adviser on labor matters for the Itaipu binational agency and a former adviser of former Justice Minister J. Eugenio Jacquet. These board members already have a draft resolution that will annul the election in San Estanislao, San Pedro, and in other districts where the Argana-Ybanez ticket obtained major electoral victories. The resolution will, however, uphold the electoral results in all other districts, but always making sure that the Wasmosy-Seifart ticket lead the final vote count by a margin of 11,000 to 13,000 votes—to be precise, 12,600 votes.

Efforts are currently under way to ensure that [electoral board chairman] Elizardo Bobadilla endorses this antidemocratic ruling. It is taken for granted that the pressures and threats will be effective. Thus, the board—that is, those members who support a coup against democracy—will not honor the petition to annul the entire election. It will, however, find a more effective solution by partially annulling the election in some districts to obtain a tally that will satisfy its interests and that will distort the people's will and thus obtain the proclamation of Wasmosy-Seifart as the presidential ticket of the National Republic Association. [Colorado Party]

This clever antidemocratic solution was conceived by [Justice Minister] Oscar Paciello, who has already drafted the respective resolution that will be hand carried and submitted to the board by Paredes, who is completely loyal to the Wasmosy sector for whom he served as adviser for many years at Itaipu [binational hydroelectric project].

This resolution will certainly be approved by the board by a majority vote of its members on the afternoon of 8 January. By a majority vote the board will proclaim the Wasmosy-Seifart as the alleged winning ticket.

Fellow party members, we have discovered this plot through dedicated members. It is our obligation and moral duty to report this to all party members, to the entire nation, and to international news agencies and media organizations, so that they may be aware of the attempts being made to disrupt and to destroy democracy in the Republic of Paraguay. [end recording]

APT Authorized To Act as Political Movement

PY0801000093 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 3 Jan 93 p 5

[Summary] The Electoral Court of Asuncion has officially authorized the group Asuncion For All [APT] to operate as a political movement. This is the step prior to becoming a full-fledged political movement. APT now has two years to meet the requirements established in the Electoral Code to obtain final recognition as a political movement: namely, 5,000 members and representation in at least four departmental capital cities.

Peru

Fujimori Meets Chief of U.S. Southern Command

PA0801044793 Lima Global de Television Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 8 Jan 92

[Text] President Fujimori received in his office General George Joulwan, commander in chief of the U.S. Southern Command, a U.S. military component in this part of the hemisphere. The officials met for an hour and discussed the progress achieved by Peru in the struggle against drug trafficking and in military cooperation.

[Begin recording, Joulwan in English with passage-by-passage translation into Spanish] Good afternoon. I held a very fruitful one-hour meeting with the president. We discussed the very positive steps that he and Peru are taking toward democratization. We had a very good discussion on the mutual steps we both can take in the fight against drug trafficking. [end recording]

Venezuela

Interior Minister Pinerua Announces Resignation

PA0701170293 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 1550 GMT 7 Jan 93

[News conference by Interior Minister Luis Pinerua Ordaz with unidentified reporters at the Miraflores Palace in Caracas—live; monitored in progress]

[Text] [Pinerua]...my decision to resume my usual political activities, which are in the street, not in the government. Thus, it is up to the government to reach a decision. Of course, I will not be so irresponsible as to leave the post before the president decides on my replacement.

[Reporter] The president has not yet decided on your replacement?

[Pinerua] I believe not, because he has not notified me. I will thoroughly, seriously, and responsibly fulfill my duties as a minister for as long as necessary.

[Reporter] The president has already received your letter of resignation?

[Pinerua] It is not necessary to formalize this by letter. As I said on a previous occasion, it is a matter that the president and I have been discussing for some time.

[Reporter] Do you have presidential aspirations?

[Pinerua] I will decide on that after this matter has been concluded.

[Reporter] There are reports that persons implicated in the robbery of 80 million [currency not given] have entered the country and nothing has been done, despite the fact that arrest warrants have been issued against them.

[Pinerua] Well, there was no ban on their entering the country.

[Reporter] Have they been arrested?

[Pinerua] If they are in the country, it is up to the police forces to locate and arrest them.

Deputy Defense Minister Esdraa Resigns

PA0701163193 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1543 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Caracas, 7 Jan (NOTIMEX)—Oscar Esdraa, Venezuelan deputy defense minister, has retired for personal reasons at a time when the November 1992 coupists charge that generalized military corruption provoked the foiled coup.

Esdraa, who was scheduled for retirement in July 1994, transferred his post on 6 January to General Nery Guevara, the daily EL NACIONAL reported on 7 January.

Military sources quoted by the newspaper said Esdraa resigned after the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DIM) investigated his alleged participation in the 27 November foiled coup.

"He was harassed in such a manner that he preferred resigning," the sources added. The officer rejected reports that loyal forces found his photograph on one of the rebels who took over the state television channel during the second rebellion of 1992. The source added he resigned for personal reasons, which he did not further explain.

EL NACIONAL pointed out Esdraa was in charge of reinstating the soldiers who participated in the February 1992 foiled coup after it was proven they were innocent because they were following orders from their superior.

The process, which sought to restore the unity of the Armed Forces, encountered several obstacles that reportedly "disenchanted" the now former director general of the Defense Ministry, which is the official name of the post of deputy minister. [passage omitted]

Defense Minister on Investigation Into Coup

PA0801042893 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 2350 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] Defense Minister General Ivan Dario Jimenez Sanchez confirmed on 7 January that the Armed Forces are investigating the soldiers who were allegedly implicated in the thwarted 27 November coup.

The resignation of Gen. Gonzalez Beltran, director general of defense, was because of his failing health, which makes it difficult for him to continue in his post, according to Defense Minister Gen. Jimenez Sanchez. Jimenez denied that Gen. Gonzalez Beltran was under military investigation, because as defense minister he would have had to order such an investigation.

He explained that a group of Venezuelan Air Force officers and noncommissioned officers are being investigated in this respect.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified Reporter] Reports have it that an investigation has begun of 100 Air Force officers. Is that true?

[Jimenez] Well, not exactly 100 officers. A large number of officers and noncommissioned officers are being investigated in connection with the 27 November incident. [end recording]

The defense minister referred to the Brazilian gold panners, saying that instructions have been issued to the jungle brigades, to regional command no. 8, and to the river patrol to step up surveillance along the border region in Bolivar State.

Perez Dismisses Rumors, Says Democracy 'Undefeatable'

PA0601140093 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 2350 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] President Carlos Andres Perez stated Venezuelan democracy is undefeatable and there is total tranquillity in the country and only rumors exist.

President Perez said to protect the democratic system he must show consideration and respect toward regional governments, as he promoted the transformations and regionalization in the country.

Regarding rumors, Perez said they are part of a machinery organized to provoke the country's destabilization, create uncertainty, hurt the economy, and discourage investments.

[Begin Perez recording] I ask my compatriots and foreigners who live in our country not to believe in rumors. The country's situation is stable. Fortunately, we have already overcome the regrettable phase we experienced last year with the two coup attempts, which showed that democracy is undefeatable in Venezuela. [end recording]

Perez Reports Surveillance on Brazilian Border

PA0801004693 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 1550 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] Commenting on the alleged invasion by Brazilian gold panners in Bolivar State, President Carlos Andres Perez has confirmed that the Armed Forces are continuing their surveillance operations to keep the gold panners from settling in Venezuelan territory.

[Begin Perez recording] The Armed Forces in Bolviar State are on a permanent surveillance mission over this vast Amazonian territory. We have always succeeded. As a matter of fact, we have created such awareness of the problem that private citizens who tour the region report any anomalies they notice. Appropriate investigations are conducted immediately.

This happened not long ago, when a signal was placed inside Venezuela as if it were Brazilian territory. Immediately after we received the report from a concerned Venezuelan citizen, the Armed Forces began an investigation. The report turned out to be true, and we filed a complaint. The problem was resolved. As for the gold panners, we have a continuous invasion by Brazilians, Colombians, and even Venezuelans in areas where exploratory mining is banned. [end recording]

Guyana

PNC Official Says Impeachment 'Impossible'

FL0601230893 Bridgetown CANA in English 1945 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Jan 6, CANA—An official of Guyana's opposition People's National Congress (PNC) said the impeachment of party leader Desmond Hoyte was impossible because the party's constitution has no such provision.

In a letter published Wednesday in the STABROEK NEWS, Jeffrey Thomas, who served as regional development minister in the former PNC government, dismissed calls by four longstanding PNC members for Hoyte's impeachment over what they said was his violation of the party's constitution in selecting the PNC parliamentary team.

"I do not know what is this procedure of impeachment since the party constitution does not provide for it," wrote Thomas, the PNC's head of party affairs and mass organisations. He also rejected as "frivolous" a call by the four party members for a special congress to oust the former president and elect a new leader. He said under the party's constitution, four persons cannot demand a special congress.

Thomas was one of four senior government ministers sacked by Hoyte in a cabinet shake-up in June 1991. He was also among 14 former government ministers dropped from the new PNC parliamentary team which has become the centre of a rift between Hoyte and former PNC Deputy Leader Hamilton Green. Thomas said reports that Hoyte had responded to the impeachment call by declaring a state of emergency within the party were "erroneous, unjustified, and wicked."

"Since the application for the convening of a special congress is procedurally ill-founded, there is no need for the party leader to take any action in respect of it. It will, however, be brought to the attention of the central executive committee of the party when it meets later this month," he said. Thomas also denied Hoyte had assumed unprecedented powers by invoking an emergency clause in the party's constitution.

"All he has done is to assume a limited authority to enable him to deal with pressing aspects of party reorganisation, which the last central executive committee meeting deemed to be urgent. Some of these matters had to be dealt with before the end of 1992. This authority will be relinquished when the central executive committee meets later this month," Thomas said.

The former minister said it was "untrue" that three "ranking members" of the PNC, including former minister of fisheries and Georgetown Mayor Robert Williams, had been dismissed from "substantive posts." However, Williams, who until late December was the chairman of the party's Georgetown district, confirmed his dismissal Wednesday in the STABROEK NEWS.

"I was told that the party could not continue to pay me.... that it was part of the re-organisation of the party in an effort to bring in younger people," Williams told the paper. Williams denied reports that he had been removed from the PNC's executive committee. "No one can remove me other than the voters and I will continue to vigorously represent the views of those who elected

me," he said. Williams continued: "I further say that I find it strange that with all that has happened—the resignation of the general secretary and the deputy leader and other matters of grave importance within the party like disciplinary measures—a meeting of the central executive committee, which was statutorily due since December 18 or 20, cannot yet be summoned even though all the members are in the country." he was referring to the resignation of Seeram Prashad as general secretary late last month and disciplinary proceedings being initiated against former Prime Minister Hamilton Green on January 13 for allegedly making "disparaging remarks" against Hoyte.

Former prime minister, Dr. Ptolemy Reid, the party's "elder statesman," is heading a committee which has summoned Green for "impugning" Hoyte's character. Green resigned as deputy party leader and from the PNC's central executive following his omission from the parliamentary team, put together after the party lost the government in general elections Last october 5. He cited "philosophical differences" between himself and Hoyte. The controversy has split the party into two factions, one each supporting Hoyte and Green.

Legislation To Postpone Local Elections Tabled

FL0801014693 Bridgetown CANA in English 2145 GMT 7 Jan 93

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Jan 7, CANA—Guyana's Prime Minister Sam Hinds tabled legislation in the National Assembly on Thursday to facilitate the postponement of municipal local government elections for one year. Municipal elections, which were constitutionally due by December 4, 1992, have not been held since 1976. The government wants to postpone the elections for one year to allow for the revision of the voters list.

Attorney General Bernard de Santos told CANA the one-year postponement is just a "safety valve," adding that the elections will be held "long before that." He said the government would use the final voters list on which the October 5 general elections were held, as the basis for the new preliminary list.